



E. H. TATTERSALL, D.S.O., SOME TIME AN OFFICER OF THE
FIFTY BRIGADE, CYMBRISTON

(Don't know)

EUROPE AT PLAY

BY

E. H. TATTERSALL



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TORONTO

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“This Book is a series of faint reflections—mere shadows in the water—of places to which the imaginations of most people are attracted in a greater or less degree, on which mine had dwelt for years, and which have some interest for all. The greater part of the descriptions were written on the spot, and sent home, from time to time, in letters. I do not mention the circumstances as an excuse for any defects they may present, for it would be none; but as a guarantee to the Reader that they were at least penned in the fulness of the subject, and with the liveliest impressions of novelty and freshness.”

CHARLES DICKENS
Pictures from Italy.

P R E F A C E

BY

SIR HUGH WALPOLE

I WILL BEGIN with a certain frankness—were I not an old friend of the author of this book I should not, I am sure, read further than the first chapter. That sounds rude but it is not intended so. The fact is that I came up, in the very first pages, against one of my pet private foibles—I mean the scattering of a book with the names of people I don't know. For instance, "The best parties are those given each Wednesday by Colonel Knowles Stansfield, whose Russian wife entertains on a large scale": or again, "In their party were Mrs. Robert Wilson, Count Hans Czernin and Baron Hubert Pantz ('Hans' and 'Pantz' of Mittersill Club fame in Austria) and Miss Penelope Maffey, who was responsible for Princess Juliana having her hair cut short." Such paragraphs as this make me feel that I am quite the wrong person to preface this book. Obviously these pages are concerned with a world within whose horizons I should be most unhappy and with occupations that would simply bore me to tears. But in a way I am the right person to preface this, because the majority of my friend's readers will be, as myself, uninhabitants of this world the author describes, and therefore curious to learn about its colours and forms and habits. I have long since known that "Bunny" Tattersall, one of the most kindly and generous of men, is distinguished especially

a haunt for wildfowl as when Abel Chapman wrote of it, forty years ago.

And let me not forget to thank the noble army of distinguished authors from whose works I have purloined jewels, and shamelessly reset them in much more mundane surroundings than those to which they have been accustomed.

A point upon which I should like to lay emphasis is that the essential character of the Continental resorts, if undisturbed by political stress, remains quite unchanged. Take Le Touquet, Deauville, Cannes, Monte Carlo, Baden-Baden, Lido or Venice, for example. Except for divorces, deaths and a few financial failures the imposing lists of people who patronise such resorts are subject to very little wastage as the years pass by.

The most notable change in the last ten years of Continental luxury life is the popularity of the summer season on the Riviera. In the winter the younger generation make for the ski resorts, while their parents sit gracefully in the sunshine of the Côte d'Azur. In the heat of the summer the parents wisely seek cooler climes, while youth answers the call of what has been described as "The International Drinking Season," the headquarters of which carry the postal address "Alpes Maritimes."

In the Austrian sections you will find descriptions which are considerably smudged by European events since they were written, especially the chapters about Vienna. I thought it unwise to alter them, and to leave the reader to judge between the past and the present. Every care will be taken by the German Government to keep Austria's holiday resorts on the pleasure map of Europe, so that our Kitzbühel panorama, for example, will be little changed.

E. H. T.

June, 1938.

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IN SEARCH OF SUN

First Year

MILAN, LEADING TO SAN REMO, BORDIGHERA,
MONTE CARLO AND CANNES

MILAN

April

BRIGHT SHINES the morning sun, and as I go to catch the train to San Remo, Queen of the Italian Riviera, I make for myself an enchanting picture of the day which lies before me. On the journey to Genoa (of which the harbour, as seen in the half-light from the heights above the city, is listed by Osbert Sitwell as one of the beauty spots of Europe) I shall pass by Tortona, a little town on the plains of Piedmont for which I have a great affection.

It is a dull, uninteresting place, but nineteen years ago I was serving there as a youthful A.D.C. to one of the kindest men I have ever met, Major-General J. A. Strick. The sight of the little white house with a red roof on the hill-top, which was the H.Q. Mess, will make me breathe a grateful prayer of remembrance to one who taught me that not all brass-hats were barking bogies.

Then comes Arquata, which was the British base of that district, where Major Charles Vaughan (always referred to by the Italians as "Majeur Wagon"), of Courtfield-on-Wye, was the D.A.Q.M.G.; here also are the graves of one hundred British soldiers. One is informed by Baedeker that after leaving Genoa the views along the railway to San Remo are *sadly* interrupted by tunnels. It is a picturesque thought, and, as usual, this eminent guide is correct.

Nor has my visit to Milan been profitless during the few days before Easter, although at times it was tinged with disappointment. What more simple, I thought,

than to ring up the Excelsior Hotel in Rome and spend a few quiet days there in search of knowledge? Not a room was to be had in the whole city. A further call to Naples certainly precluded any thought of going there, unless one had rooms in Capri to which to repair. And as Capri had been booked up completely for the past month, there was no chance of a bed except among the goats and the camellia bushes.

Fortunately I remembered being armed with a letter from Quaglino to the Royal Hotel at San Remo, and it has worked wonders; moreover, I am anxious to see whether the reports of the high gambling there are correct. So it will be "once more into the Casino, dear friends, to storm the *cagnotte's* mouth"; if I am eminently successful, it will be necessary to buy a local palazzo, for you cannot take more than a certain number of lire out of the country.

The craze for Bridge in Milan still continues: I believe the Italians will go on playing the game until the last trump has sounded. My card-playing has had to wait for the coming Casino nights; each evening here I have been musically occupied.

And rarely could such a treat be given to a music-lover as to have been present at the Palazzo Toscanini for the reception given by his friends and relations for the *maestro's* seventieth birthday. As he is acknowledged to be the greatest conductor who has ever lived, one could not feel but honoured to be one of the three English people present.

I fear that Oscar, the barman at the Excelsior Gallia Hotel (he is a mine of information for any visitor to Milan), was kept up late that night listening to our eulogies of Toscanini after we returned to the hotel. In

Italy if you mention his name they throw up their hands, turn up their eyes in adoration and say nothing; every other living musician gets his share of adverse criticism.

The Busch String Quartet played Beethoven and Brahms: the air was charged with that electricity which has characterised the *maestro's* every appearance. He sat unobtrusively in a corner, nodding his leonine head, out of sight of the players, yet instinctively conducting every note of the music.

The house was littered with telegrams of congratulation and flowers; in a side-room one could see musical treasures, photographs of Verdi and Puccini, with affectionate greetings inscribed. The head of Wagner stared at one with his haughty majesty; a similar occasion must have been the first playing of the *Siegfried Idylle* as a birthday celebration for his wife, Cosima, in the presence of a few friends.

Vladimir Horowitz and Rudolf Serkin played a Mozart sonata duet. The former had not appeared since a year ago, recovering so slowly from his long illness; his wife, Toscanini's younger daughter, anxiously watched her husband playing. The occasion gave him the courage to face an audience again, but we only heard duets, and I did so long for some of Liszt's *Venezia e Napoli*.

At one moment I presumed to smile that nodding smile of musical understanding to an auburn-haired Venetian. She closed her lustrous eyes in languorous fashion, and turned her thoughts to Beethoven—or more likely to her best boy-friend.

Afterwards a supper, and a huge birthday cake with seventy candles; there was, too, a special champagne cup flavoured with *fraises du bois*, which was ladled out like soup. Contessa Castelbarco, the *maestro's* eldest

daughter, helped her mother and sister to entertain the guests, one of whom was Mr. Harold Holt, whose stay in Milan was almost reduced to a state of siege produced by incipient *prima donnas*.

I shudder to think what would happen to music in England were it not for the solo performance of Harold Holt as an impresario. He is the only one left in the world: others are solely concert agents, whereas he shoulders all the risk and responsibility. Sturdily built, of rubicund countenance and husky voice, he is a brilliant linguist, and never appears worried. He is one of the few exponents of the lost art of conversation, and as a raconteur is a master of embellished wit.

The kindness for which so many of his artists have good reason to bless him is known to them, but never to others. Apart from everything else, he is a "grand turn," a fine fisherman, and a keen shot. His shooting takes place over part of Sir John Dashwood's land at West Wycombe: in the syndicate are Messrs. Broom, father and son, who make those instruments which play such delightful street music—compressed air drills for churning up the roads. Another member is Mr. Cyril Cohen, one of the heads of the scrap-iron industry in this country. And without scrap-iron there can be no steel. One can add that he is not wholly responsible for the street cry, "Any old iron?"

Mr. Holt would certainly have a very interesting day's sport if he mobilised some of his artists. One can imagine the London Philharmonic Orchestra acting as beaters, all under the eagle eye of Sir Thomas Beecham, who would also place the team of guns in position and read out to them general and local rules of shooting.

A good team could be collected with Tauber, Heifetz,

Kreisler, Backhaus, Horowitz, Piatigorsky and Novotna for instance, with young Yehudi Menuhin walking up with the beaters in view of being the junior member present. Novotna, the Czechoslovakian singer, would probably prove the best shot in that *équipage*: she browns partridges by the score on her husband's vast estates in their home-country.

Luncheon would be a great event, brought out under the care of Menuhin *père*, who would escort his daughter Hephzibah, Ida Haendel, Guila Bustabo, Grace Moore, Lisa Minghetti, and Diana Napier. After lunch Mr. Holt could tell some stories, and I expect Menuhin *père* would produce a fresh contract for Yehudi for signature. Mr. Holt's latest treasure is a black-and-white check scarf presented to him by Hephzibah ("Yew" and "Hep" in the home circle): he rather resembles a Dalmatian when he wears it in the evenings.

Musicians are not generally very sporting (they normally have to take such care of their hands), though I believe Kubelik once had a partridge shoot in Hungary, and Backhaus likes a game of billiards. Some of them place their art first and the box office second (most reverse the order), with everything else among the "also rans." One recalls the great Mr. Barnum who had engaged Jenny Lind for his show. "And how is the great diva singing to-night?" he was asked. "I don't know. I've not been round to the box office yet," he replied.

Let us quote Mr. Holt's classic telegram. With one of the gramophone chiefs he was listening to the records of a new soprano. Picture him nodding his head portentously, exclaiming "Yes, the quality's there all right," and nodding again his assent as the singer took

the high notes "in the middle of the bat." They decided to give her an audition: it was imperative that one of them should go at once to Italy to hear her with a view to contracts.

Off goes Mr. Holt, while his friend anxiously awaits the report. But operatic singers are unfortunately not always gifted with the figure of one of "Les Girls," and the telegram read:—

"Voice not one fraction behind record but
behind quite one fraction above record."

At La Scala I heard some real rough stuff, in the first two acts of Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini*: the next two acts are very long and serious. The Castle of the Malatesta family in Rimini stands exactly the same to-day as it did in that city of the period written of by Gabriele d'Annunzio, whose tragedy forms the libretto of the opera.

Puccini's cowboy opera, *The Girl of the Golden West*, which I also saw at La Scala, has a plot like one of the old biograph silent films. The heroine pranced about in a red skirt, shaking her peroxide blonde hair in Jean Arthur's best manner, with elbows akimbo. The cowboy chorus hopped round the saloon in staccato fashion, instead of lounging and chewing gum, as do the best film cowboys. There was one character named Billy Jack Rabbit, but all we heard were a few squawks from his squaw, Wowkle. Apart from which the production, scenery, and lighting could not have been better.

Stendhal, in *Chartreuse de Parme*, tells of that type of Lombard beauty, *bellezza folgorante*, which can be realised only at Milan, and in La Scala, when you see assembled

there the thousand beautiful women of Lombardy. I have to admit that the numbers have decreased since Stendhal's days, 140 years ago, though one must give very high marks to the blonde beauty of Signora Vittorio Crespi, born a Bernasconi from the shores of Lake Como.

SAN REMO

April

FRIENDLY FROGS croak (or whatever frogs do) each evening after sundown, as they sit at the foot of the palm-trees in the gardens of the Royal Hotel at San Remo, below which one can listen to the waves as they hasten towards the pebble shore. It is pleasant to let one's thoughts ebb and flow to their funny little music, and wonder what sort of an evening they will spend capering about among the Brompton stocks and cineraria which flank all the paths.

For one knows so well that one's own evening will be spent in the Casino, and I must say that as regards Casino life and amusement provided by the Directorate, there is none better than that at San Remo.

Having heard so much about the heavy gambling here, I found that although both the *Cercle Privé* and the ordinary rooms are full (and there is not a bed to be found in any hotel), the play is not nearly so high as at Deauville, Le Touquet, Cannes, or Monte Carlo. It is a different type of clientèle, not as chic as at these other places. You do not have to wear evening clothes in the *Cercle Privé*, although its ante-rooms are furnished as ornately as a Venetian *palazzo*.

For five *lire* (about a shilling) you can see a cabaret on which they spend about £250 a week: the Percy Athos Follies were there, a team of English blondes (always ably surrounded by dark Italian swains) whom one had already in the past seen careering about the floors of Grosvenor House and the Dorchester.

Roulette seems the most popular game, although there is a high *chemin-de-fer* table which continues till 8 o'clock each morning; the Italians gamble very quickly, a reason why the *trente-et-quarante* table is always full. On one occasion I saw a lovely Italian girl, with the black, melted-butter eyes of her race, running round the *chemin-de-fer* tables like a pirate crying "*Banco!*" at two or three tables at a time, and then bolting back to take her place at the big table.

On the even chances there is a maximum of 70,000 *lire*, which is the heaviest in the world, and about twice as big as at Monte Carlo. If you stake that sum and it turns up for you, that *palazzo* is automatically yours, for you can only take home some 300 *lire*.

Attached to the Casino is the best restaurant on the Italian Riviera: it is owned by Quirico, who was for twelve years at the Hermitage, at Le Touquet. A pleasant dinner at Quirico's (and make sure to eat the local sea-fish) and you are in the right frame of mind to walk down two corridors into the new little Opera House which is comfortably installed in the Casino. Here I heard *Andréa Chenier* with its turbulent, revolutionary music, and *Il Trovatore*: in the latter we had a typical grand opera "incident."

The tenor, Lauri-Volpi, was singing, and after giving us his very best for three acts, there was suddenly a pause in the last act, a certain amount of *chi-chi* in the orchestra, and Lauri-Volpi stopped singing. "*Avanti!*" (or "Get on with it!") cried the audience, but the tenor left the last aria unsung, and walked off to die without having said farewell to Leonora. Lauri-Volpi's gesticulations in the Royal Hotel the next morning, when explaining away the hostile attitude adopted by the local

papers, provided us with an excellent prelude to the first *Americano* of the day.

Life is very comfortable, calm and pleasant in San Remo, and remarkably cheap; the bar-boy element is entirely absent, good behaviour and good manners predominating in the public places. The Royal Hotel at one time had a clientèle seventy per cent English, and many of these visitors are now coming back with the lengthened *lire*. The atmosphere essentially is rather the same as at the Palace Hotel at Mürren—all very nice.

You get sometimes, however, that formidable type of Englishwoman who explains in a loud voice to everybody what her *en pension* terms have been at all the other hotels in which she has stayed in Europe. But nobody after the first encounter takes much notice of such people, and it is nicer to pass the time of day with those dear, quiet, elderly, timid souls who creep about mouse-like among the flowers.

I wish I could see Victoria Cross, who is usually here, but, like a fifth of the people who stay in Riviera hotels, she has all her meals upstairs. Thirty or forty years ago her novels shocked society: to-day their sentiments would not raise a hair in the schoolroom or shock the most susceptible *mademoiselle*. With what avidity did a French governess pounce upon a book by Elinor Glyn or Victoria Cross!

This is a wonderful area for gardens: incidental always to gardening is longevity. In Bordighera there are many gay eighties and some pretty nippy nineties among the English residents; a girl of seventy can be said to be hardly out of her débutanteship in this society.

I have never seen a more lovely small garden (and I accentuate the word "small" when I think of such large

paradises as the Balsan villa at Eze, or the Hanbury villa at La Mortola) than that of Mr. Moffatt Smith at Poggio Ponente, between Bordighera and Ventimiglia. It was in this villa that the Queen spent some of her childhood; many English visitors make a loyal little pilgrimage to it.

The moment you pass the Italian frontier you should approach from the Monte Carlo side on the rock-guarded Riviera road, it seems that there are ten wild flowers growing by the roadside to every one on the other side of the border. Ventimiglia has a famous flower market; at 4.15 every afternoon the baskets are opened, and at least 700,000 carnations are sold in this market every day.

Mr. Moffatt Smith, whom so many officers quartered in East Sussex during the war will remember with gratitude as the Master of the Southdown Hounds, now devotes his time to gardening, and with the assistance of the former head gardener from La Mortola, he wins silver and gold medals at horticultural exhibitions all over Italy.

From the top terrace of the garden, with the mistral (a clean favourable wind in these parts, blowing straight down the coast from Marseilles—it is the sirocco which is not liked) bearing up the scent of flowers from the terraces below, the effect is amazing upon those unused to tropical foliage.

This particular garden is one of the few on the Italian Riviera which have any grass in them to offset the colours of the flowers; it also concentrates on fragrance more than colour. For horticultural experts I may add that the scents come from pittosporums, persia, camphor trees, heliotrope, roses, and orange blossom.

There are also in the woodlands *cynoglossum*, *amabile*,

forget-me-not, ranunculus, and cyclamen: and there are olives, clipped cypress hedges, lemons, masses of Banksian roses and arum lilies. Features on the terraces, in addition to irises, geraniums, tulips, and golden gleam nasturtiums, are deep blue echiums, rather like giant delphiniums.

"When the world wearies
And Society ceases to satisfy,
There is always the garden,"

is the inscription on one of the seats in an arbour overlooking the Mediterranean.

Bridge, with a leavening of scandal, is the afternoon's recreation of nearly every English resident or visitor in the Bordighera neighbourhood. The best parties are those given each Wednesday by Colonel Knowles Stansfield, whose Russian wife entertains on a large scale.

There is one invitation which I must be sure to accept: to lunch at the Savoy Hotel with Aletto, *maitre d'hôtel* of the Ritz in London, who is a prominent figure out here on holiday in the world of bowls. During August he takes out his team of London Italians to play the locals, when Marshal Badoglio rolls the skip for them and presents the prizes.

MONTE CARLO

April

YOU ARE RIGHT to think that in my peregrinations from one casino to another, in the hot, feverish life which is incidental to such prowling, there are days when one complains against the mutability of fortune, impugns fate and the stars, and sighs for the preponderance of blacks over reds.

Fortunately the latter colour predominated on the Italian side of the border. As yet there has not even been time to toy with a Monagasque plaque, but a few minutes with Lord Michelham or Mr. Sidney Beer will soon put me *au courant* with life in the Principality.

The cheerful faces of the staff at the Metropole Hotel told me at once of the good times here: it scarcely needed Mr. Scheck, the manager, to say that it was by far the best season they had enjoyed for eight years. The signs stare you in the face all the time, even to waiters radiating a cheerful atmosphere as they clear tables after a meal, to the sound of their own subdued humming.

There is an abundance of new wealth, if not of young faces, owned by many who have never seen such life before. I believe that the day of the perfect gigolo is returning, which will enable Gilbert Frankau to write a sequel to his clever book, *Dance, Little Lady*.

There is something splendidly artificial about Monte Carlo, like a skilfully made-up woman, who never allows herself to be seen at dawn; you feel you could not be surprised to see Fred Astaire or either of the

Jacks (Buchanan or Hulbert) come dancing down the steps of the Casino and up those of the Hôtel de Paris opposite, evening coat-tails flying and top-hats neatly askew.

In addition to the casino life there are ballet, operatic, and golfing interludes. There should be every chance for me to avenge a previous series of defeats at the hands of Mr. Evelyn Fitzgerald in Aix-les-Bains, and another serious encounter will be with Mr. Michael Arlen on the Mandelieu course, a tactful way of announcing that I am going on to Cannes.

It is hard enough to get into any of these Riviera towns, so full are they, but not nearly as difficult as it is to get away; as usual there are no sleeping berths to Paris for over a fortnight. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum* is the motto of the Riviera when a visitor wants to leave.

Prices have not been raised at all in Monte Carlo, and with the present rate of exchange you can live very reasonably; it is the same on the Italian Riviera. On one occasion only in my wanderings have I found any suggestion of profiteering, and that was outside the range of the Principality.

At a restaurant in this neighbourhood luncheon for two, with a bottle of light Provençal wine and one liqueur each, worked out at £2 14s. Two local sea-fish cost ten shillings and some lamb fifteen shillings, and the coffee made two separate appearances on the bill.

On my remonstrating slightly the *patron* produced the market prices out of his pocket. Afterwards I showed my bill to Mr. Scheck, in whose judgment, as manager of the Continental Gordon Hotels, one can have every faith. He said: "Why did not you tell me you thought

of going there? I am continually having complaints about that place."

And Lord Michelham added: "I know where you have been—to Humbug House. Did the *patron* produce the market prices out of his pocket?" So it was evidently an old story, and one can only presume that the prices are so high because the place is so high up.

* * * *

Never imagine that you are a true soldier or have any practical knowledge of warfare until you have fought your first Battle of Flowers. It is an encounter which I had shirked for many years, but at last a rose has found its billet in my face, flung with masterly precision by one of those typically pretty English girls whose faces, once seen, are never remembered again.

There was the light of battle in Lord Michelham's eye when I saw him on the terrace of the Café de Paris before luncheon. "Do you mean to say that you are not coming to the Battle of Flowers?" he exclaimed. Having expected to see a local belle in each carriage, it was a surprise to find that the hotels had been combed for English beauties, who assured us that the organisers had almost adopted the methods of a press-gang.

A maroon and some startled pigeons announced the "off". It was nice to see a friendly face or two peering out of the flower-bedecked carriages: one could only suggest to Miss Miller-Mundy that her father's great friend, Mr. Tom Purdey, should have been on the box-seat of her carriage; he has the presence for such occasions. There was one really exquisite Norwegian blonde who travelled alone in her glory, Mlle Kari Aarhus.

In the royal box were Princess Juliana and Prince

Bernhard Lippe-Biesterfeld; they thoroughly enjoyed the contest and had a noble battle, especially with Mlle. Aarhus, who had unfortunately sat on most of the floral missiles. Prince Bernhard has a great sense of humour, speaks perfect English, eternally chews gum, and appears to take a very cheerful view of life. In their party were Mrs. Robert Wilson, Count Hans Czernin, and Baron Hubert Pantz (our friends "Hans and Pants" of Mittersill Club fame in Austria) and Miss Penelope Maffey (now Mrs. William Aitken), who was responsible for Princess Juliana having her hair cut short.

The battle, fought under the shadow of the Casino, lasted but two hours; it was just one hour too long. At the beginning, possibly due to luncheon, one felt as light-hearted as Hugh Walpole's "Maradick at Forty" when he took part in the dance round the town of Treliss, in Cornwall. The end, like the end of most events in Monte Carlo, saw one quickly back in one of those comfortable arm-chairs in the bar of the Sporting Club.

Should wars be decided by battles of flowers, Norway would have a great fighting chance if represented by Mlle Kari Aarhus, who must be accounted an easy winner of the floral marathon in the Square of Monte Carlo. Prince Jean-Louis de Faucigny-Lucinge had gone back to Paris on business, else this very enterprising director of the Société des Bains de Mer (alternative name for Monte Carlo) would have certainly presented her with the freedom of the Sporting Club.

On this particular evening refreshments at the Sporting Club bar had to be limited to sherry; a dinner at Quinto's was on the menu. And Quinto's specialise in claret and burgundy, and how these wines dislike cock-

tails and cigarettes! At their restaurant in London I have drunk magnums of Cheval Blanc 1920 at dinners given by Mr. Hubert Meredith (Mr. Philip Hill's No. 1 of his Company), who follows the pleasant, if selfish, tradition of giving claret dinners for men only. Yet few women appreciate claret: I am sure that nine out of ten in a restaurant would not know if they were drinking claret or burgundy.

Quinto's food both here and in London is classic, and his claret will surely draw Mr. Israel Sieff over from Cannes to taste it. Mr. Sieff is the vice-chairman of Marks and Spencer, a man of intense culture and artistic sense, possessing that kindliness which characterises the heads of this Company—an idealist, too, and one of the most ardent Zionists. In his flat in Brook House he also gives claret-tasting dinners, roast mutton and cheese soufflé being the dishes for the benefit of these wines.

Here was the order of running at one dinner—Château Rauzan Segla 1900; Château Ausone 1911; Château Mouton-Rothschild 1899; Château Haut-Brion 1906; Château Lafite 1870, with a wine to end up which must rank as L'Aiglon to the Emperors—Château Cheval Blanc 1921. If you could see Colonel Ian Campbell (the Krug agent for England) with his white moustache, red carnation and half-closed eyes, gently swinging this wine round in a balloon glass, you would have a perfect portrait entitled "The Claret Expert." Nor would this vintage give occasion to Mr. C. M. Wells, another great connoisseur of wine, to scent the bouquet, murmuring "Un peu de what hol, I rather think?", his remark if the wine is not up to his taste.

It is extraordinary the number of friends that you will discover should you sit in the Sporting Club bar chatting

to such a pretty companion as Mlle Aarhus, instead of resting in a silence distilled from ages of loneliness. The preliminaries of "Can I come and sit here for a minute?", "Won't you introduce me?", are followed almost immediately (to the girl only) by "I didn't quite catch your name," for the bluff of your inaudible mumble will soon be called, leading to "Do come and sit by me—I'm sure you'll bring me luck with my banks."

However, I take no selfish views on such matters, rather rejoicing instead that my friends are appreciative; and when such a one as Captain D'Arcy Rutherford approaches, I feel quite aware that the next time he is similarly placed (and he nearly always is) he will return the compliment. Captain Rutherford helps the Directorate of Monte Carlo in the entertainment of visitors. Being a first-class golfer, dancer, ski-boarder, with "Guardee" good looks and perfect manners, he has all the qualifications for his post. Age about forty-three, he is almost the youngest man here in the winter, whereas in the summer he is about the oldest inhabitant: there is a complete reversal of ages with the change of seasons.

For the benefit of our Norwegian beauty, let us take an inventory of the Sporting Club.

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Lord Rothermere's just starting to play his roulette game—and it's a big one!"

SELF: "Yes, but he seems to get much more enjoyment out of making money at it for his family and friends rather than for himself."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "I saw him shopping in the town this morning, with his two pretty grand-children, Lorna and Esmé Harmsworth. He's very proud of them."

SELF: "I wish I were one of his relatives. If you go

to lunch at his villa you are quite likely to find an envelope under your plate containing a *mille* note or two to spend in the Casino."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "His son Esmond Harmsworth is a fine tennis-player. I saw him at the Club yesterday evening playing with Vladimir Landau in almost Wimbledon form."

SELF: "There's a former Lord Mayor of London, Lord Ebbisham, chairman of the big printers, Blades, East and Blades. He is proud of that, but still more proud to take a hundred wickets every year in the cricket field. I helped him to achieve it at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, one September—it was almost dark when we finished the match."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Have you been over to lunch at Arthur Bendir's villa, 'La Carrière,' yet?"

SELF: "No, I saw him presiding over the famous firm of Ladbroke's (he's the head of it) in Old Burlington Street on the day of the Lincoln Handicap."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "I suppose they won a packet on the race?"

SELF: "I heard no mention of it, only a probability of losing over the Grand National. They're a great firm to deal with, especially as long as you write and tell them if you cannot pay on the Monday."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Don't you know Edward Wills quite well? I saw Lady Wills and her party over here from 'L'Oiseau Bleu' at Mentone."

SELF: "Yes, I do, and all her very delightful family too. Their villa used to belong to Gina Palerme, the Folies-Bergère queen of twenty years ago. All the blue marble bathrooms in it were designed by her. But give me the Wills's 'Littlecote' in the Kennet valley, and Meggernie

Castle, at the head of Glen Lyon in Perthshire. They are the two most perfect properties I have ever seen."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Frank Goldsmith looks in great form—he's very pleased with the success of this place. You know that, as well as being on the Board here, he has the Prince des Galles and the Scribe in Paris, a hotel at Mégève for winter sports, as well as the Carlton at Cannes?"

SELF: "I certainly did not know about the one at Mégève: they tell me you see some lovely French girls there in the season."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "I always think Mrs. Evelyn Fitz-Gerald has such a *simpatica* nature. She goes out of her way to be pleasant to people, and always manages to say something to please them. She's over in that corner with her husband."

SELF: "I must go and see how Sir Woodman Burbidge is doing with his bank—I get invited sometimes to his shooting syndicate over Marie Stopes's estate at Leatherhead. He's a cheerful, friendly performer by the covert-side."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Wait just a minute, I want to ask Francis Queensberry about his gala dinner party to-night."

SELF: "The noble marquis is a bold performer at the tables. The bolder he appears, the more level-headed does he become."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Lord Portal should be in any minute. His yacht *Star of India* is in the harbour."

SELF: "Yes, I saw him for a minute in the Hôtel de Paris. He's the great authority on the Distressed Areas question: he helps the Government a lot over the difficult points. In addition to making the Bank of England notes

and being head of Wiggins, Teape, he is a big power in the Film world. It is due to his negotiations with Geoffrey Toye and Rupert D'Oyly Carte that the huge army of Gilbert and Sullivanites are to be allowed to see the operas on the screen. He's probably one of the shrewdest men in England till seven o'clock in the evening—then he wisely relaxes sometimes."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "And I don't blame him."

SELF: "There's one person I refuse to go and talk to—that crashing old bore, the Comtesse de Faux-Tirage. She spoils every table she plays at; I never seem to miss her in any casino."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "I don't know what this place would be in the winter without Mrs. Vigo Hansen and Mrs. Hubert Martineau."

SELF: "Yes, the first is famous for her high hats, and the second for her high play and her wonderful pearls."

CAPTAIN RUTHERFORD: "Have you seen that black string she is wearing?"

SELF: "I should like to cash out one of them and play with the proceeds."

Here we pause for a minute to point out Princess Jean-Louis Faucigny-Lucinge, whose husband is one of the Directorate here. She has never been anything but chic: her mother, Baroness D'Erlanger, must have taught her the art since childhood. Everywhere she goes you will always hear, "Have you seen what Baba's wearing to-day?" Yet in her nature she is quiet and unobtrusive, always amused, yet rarely smiling.

Nearby a French marquis was expostulating with Lady Buchanan-Jardine—always pretty, always sweet-natured, and fortunately recovered from her severe illness—about his recent *séjour* in one of the very small winter sports

resorts. "*Ce n'était pas le Saint-Moritz. Que c'était triste! Pas la vie du Palais* [this to the Frenchman generalises the gay life], *pas d'orchestre, même pas un bon 'bridge'.*" In other words, he had been bored stiff.

"Well, my boy, I sincerely hope you're coming up to see us to-morrow—you know you promised. I have got a wonderful Italian *prima donna* whom you simply must hear."

I recognise the voice of Mr. J. H. van Gelder, a great authority on music and opera, who collects singers as a hobby for his home circle.

"And what is her name?" I ask. "Ah, that's a secret," he chuckles, moving away, "and you wait till you see her jewellery, too!" From which I surmise that the singer will be Madame Vina Bovy-Fischer, of the Metropolitan Opera, whose husband has a lovely property near here.

A word to Mr. Moffatt Smith about a visit to his garden at Poggio Ponente (he is standing his lawyer, Mr. John Satchell, a gin-fizz), and we find Lady Dunn, wife of the Canadian baronet, Sir James Dunn the mighty power in the Algoma Steel Company, just come in from their villa, "La Loumas," at Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat. "I've only just finished lunch," she says (it now being six o'clock). "Mr. Warden (you know him, I expect; he's a director of Associated Newspapers) gave a huge party at Caramello's." I certainly know that Mr. Warden, after many years in Paris as editor of the *Continental Daily Mail*, is one of the best judges of food in Europe, and Caramello himself considers that every visitor to his restaurant has been on a starvation diet. Such a combination could well keep one occupied till tea-time.

And we cannot close our Casino cameo with any better

picture than that of the entry of the Duke of Westminster with his party straight off the *Cutty Sark*. "Hullo, Bennie," he is greeted on all sides, "I thought you were still at Mimizan."

The Duke is the foreigner's epitome of the English *grand seigneur*. His good looks, his athleticism, his sportsmanship, and his charm of manner all create this picture. The rather *distract* way in which he often talks only conceals an intensely alert mind: at his big house parties, with forty or fifty visitors at Eaton Hall, near Chester, he notices every little characteristic of his guests, and always makes a point of being especially charming to someone who may seem shy or neglected.

Though he can afford the very best and the easiest sporting pursuits, he will only take an interest in those which are difficult—a tricky salmon river, high pheasants, or forests where the wild boars are noted for their strong running.

At his own shoot at Eaton Hall he will stand on the extreme edge of the line of guns, stopping difficult birds on the flank, but mostly watching to see how his guests are faring. The guns do not draw for places; the Duke arranges them himself before each stand, so that all shall have a fair ration of shooting.

The Duke's swift movements all over Europe are in accordance with his restless nature—and he sleeps the soundest when travelling. You will hear that he is arriving in Monte Carlo the next day; he arrives, but you never know when he is going. He may have been in the Casino overnight, but when you look at the harbour the next morning *Cutty Sark's* berth is empty and her owner probably off Cap-d'Antibes, on the way to . . . ? You might as well have asked the *Scarlet*

Pimpernel to what French port he was taking the *Daydream* from Dover.

* * * *

Nice is a huge city, quite unlike the other Riviera towns. I am afraid I know very little about it, except that it is reported to have some very entertaining cinemas, to house the biggest numbers of Russian exiles of any place in Europe, and to have a certain communistic element. But from personal experience I do know for certain that it has three fine casinos, an excellent opera house, the Promenade des Anglais, the hotels Negresco and Ruhl, and some grand little fish-restaurants on the front. It is always full when I drive through it; on this occasion they were electing a "Queen of Queens," chosen from all the provinces.

Students of French grammar need never be at a loss for complimentary adjectives—those applied to the various queens were charmingly different. For instance, the Queen of the Dauphine was described as *touchante*, that of Bourgogne as *adorable*; that of Savoie was *belle*, and of Champagne *ravissante*; the Queen from the Pyrenees was *souriante*, from Normandy she was *pimpante*, and from Alsace she was *exquise*. But the girl from Toulouse-Languedoc was merely described as *jolie*.

Pass by the hills at the back of Nice, along the Middle Corniche road leading to Mentone. A few miles up you will see the Château de Madrid, which has one of the finest positions of any restaurant in Europe, and then you will come to the little town of Eze. Its fortified castle has been in the hands of every assailant of this part of the Riviera—Romans, Lombards, Saracens, Genoese, Neapolitans, and finally, in 1860, the French.



THE BALSAN VILLA AT EZE



THE BALSAN VILLA AT EZE

GARDEN OF VILLA BOGGIO
PONENTE, BORDIGHERA.



BOGGIO WITH LONDON ITALIAN ARMY TEAM.

And had the villa of Mme Jacques Balsan been standing in those days it would have been occupied each time instead of the castle. For there is no more lovely villa or one which commands such a wonderful situation as the Balsan villa Lou Sueil at Eze.

Its gardens, over which cypress trees stand sentinel, provide nearly ten miles of pathed walks in cultivated woodland, descending right down to the valley below and to a promontory overlooking the sea. On one side you can see the distant Esterel range, Cannes, Cap-d'Antibes, and Cap-Ferrat just below; on the other lies Monaco and the Italian Riviera. And the flowers in the upper terraces of the garden are just as one sees them in the loveliest floral pictures.

Colonel and Mme Balsan return there each April from their new property in Palm Beach, where among the guests is usually her son, the Duke of Marlborough. And in May they return to Paris and go for week-ends to Saint-Georges Motel, the most perfect example of a Louis-Treize Norman *château*, with woodlands and the River Eure running alongside.

CANNES

April

ON THE COAST road from Monte Carlo, just before reaching Nice, if you turn off to the left you will find yourself on the promontory Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat. Here you can meander along several by-roads before you find the villa for which you are searching, and, should it be the Villa Mauresque, all that you will see will be a Moorish sign in red on a white gate-post.

It is the home of that great playwright and novelist, Somerset Maugham; it is imbued with that distinctive artistry with which one associates his every effort, whether in the field of letters or elsewhere.

Museum pieces stare at you quietly from every corner and never say a word unless you appreciate their presence. In contrast the dining-room is full of the works of Marie-Laurencin; from the garden you can see the Italian Riviera and the Esterel mountains. The house is, as its name implies, typically Moorish, constructed round a courtyard. A bishop had built it for his years of retirement, but it was a moderate edifice in those days, and Mr. Maugham had to rebuild and plan it again.

There is a room at the top of the house from which I should like to steal the unexpressed thoughts as well as those which we are delighted to read. For it is the classroom of the master, in which many less cultured students would be grateful to take a lesson. You can look out of a window with four panes, and not very ordinary panes, for they form a complete Gauguin

painting, bought some years ago for a small sum from an innkeeper in Tahiti.

For thirty years Mr. Maugham has been writing plays and books with the greatest success. Each work is written with supreme knowledge of every detail of the phase of life which he depicts. For instance, not one single point in his Eastern stories can be faulted for colour.

The master craftsman of the guild of authors is often accused of bitterness and harsh cynicism in his writing: this is not true, and the accusations usually emanate from sentimentalists who see life as they would like it to be, and not as it really is. Mr. Maugham is, in truth, a kindly man, though not always at ease with strangers, and not a seeker after the specious flattery which best-seller authors often encourage from their readers. For he is far beyond the orbit of such authors.

It is when reading the works of such a great writer that one is still tempted to continue the indefatigable pursuit of an unattainable perfection. Of his works it can surely be said that "Style is a magic wand, and turns everything to gold it touches," and that "The great art of writing is the art of making people real to themselves with words".

Mr. Maugham is a very keen golfer, and plays frequently on the pleasant little course at Cagnes, near Nice. Here he fights dour battles with Mr. Michael Arlen, who still preserves in his conversation that cleverness which we had from his pen; everyone is hoping for a renewal of his literary energies.

Another who plays always on the Cagnes course is the Duke of Westminster. His opponent is usually Mrs. Phyllis Satterthwaite, who has never heard of the word "tired."

A few minutes after arriving at the Carlton Hotel at Cannes one is in touch with the wins and losses at the Casino. The Greek Syndicate had been having a grand run in its favour, with all the punters cheerfully contributing to the yachts, villas, and fortunes of the combine.

But the Syndicate had a bad night recently, and what a change! The young Greek nephew of M. Zographos had been playing the cards, and his face got very long and anxious: they all held a conference at 3 a.m. because somebody had won £12,000 back from it. And, worse still, a young Viennese girl had thirteen successive winning coups against the bank, netted about £7,000, and got up to leave, remarking: "Oh, I see it's half-past one; my mother wouldn't like me to be out so late."

But M. André, the generalissimo of Cannes and Deauville, walks quietly and calmly about, nodding his head with reasonable contentment at the success of the season at Cannes; during Easter week its Casino made phenomenal takings.

It is interesting to watch M. André as he sits in the Casino at Cannes, smiling appreciatively as the big table fills up before dinner. I, too, can regard this play with an Asiatic detachment, which swiftly changes to an avid European energy on hearing in the distance at a roulette table the croupier crooning, "*Neuf, rouge, impair, et manque.*"

Self-analysis at the tables teaches us that our nerves do get on edge for stupid reasons. For instance, if your own pet number turns up and you have not backed it, you are cross and even feel a sense of injustice that anybody else should have won on it.

Whether the sun shines or not, the call of the Casino here rings out as inexorably as that of the muezzin from the minaret: for by the Casino shall they be judged, those hordes of holiday-makers who agree to forget the calm dispassionate nature of their ordinary lives and take a good, if temporary, advantage of the life so unwittingly founded for them by the late Lord Brougham, who "discovered" Cannes.

To capture the atmosphere of Cannes in its early fashionable days, you must drive about in the upper part of the town in a victoria; here you will see the Gallia Hotel, which was the site of the first Casino forty years ago.

Here, too, you will find quiet, shuttered, sheltered villas, with lilac, bees and cloistered sunshine. From their gardens comes the delicate perfume of flowers, weaving an air of mysterious romance about the identity of their owners. There may dwell in them lovely French actresses or beautiful countesses of undeniable foreign extraction; at any moment a shuttered window may be opened by a delicate hand, as if in mute invitation.

One day, as I drove by, a window opened, but only a haggard old woman shook out a dirty old towel; it seemed almost right in my face. So much for romance in Upper Cannes!

This is the season to see the Riviera villa gardens at their best; no wonder so many of them have floral names. I am told that the prettiest garden here is that of Mr. Joseph Goldman, and if you are lucky enough you will be escorted round it by its pretty chatelaine. But you must be on your best behaviour, else, like the children in the Oscar Wilde fairy story of "The Selfish Giant", you may hear a gruff voice say, "What are you

doing here? My own garden is my own garden, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself."

"Sunshine and a light breeze" has been the greeting of the hall-porter at the Carlton each morning. Hard-worked politicians all look bronzed and well, though Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha would have slept better had not the motor-horns wakened him in the early hours of each morning. He sighed for some of his own previous organisation in that respect. Mr. Lindsay Everard had piloted his own machine across the Sahara and the Mediterranean from Tunis—a new venture for him, because he always employs a pilot.

Mr. Brendan Bracken had his first mild gamble at roulette, a pleasant, leisurely game, if you take it quietly and let the croupiers put on your stakes. Mrs. Charles Cartwright is, as usual, entertaining a great deal, having bought a villa at Antibes: M. Zographos has started gambling (his baccarat play is not gambling: only a certainty for him), since he plays bridge at her house at ten francs a hundred.

Lord Horne approaches *chemin-de-fer* with a Scotsman's caution, and follows my glance as I gaze round the rooms at the lovely women, the prettiest batch I have seen for some time. And I am remembering visits to Deauville, Le Touquet, Baden-Baden, and Vienna, as well as the winter sports resorts. There are also several who behave as if they were beautiful, as most American women do; it is the secret of their charm.

And Sir Hugo de Bathe has the nicest car and such a pretty wife, while he himself has not lost in figure or appearance those fine looks which have made him one of the outstanding personalities on the Riviera for the last forty years.

Mr. Eric Loder claims to have just celebrated his fiftieth birthday; he looks no more than thirty-two. Mr. "Timmie" Gordon, the solicitor, recalls how Michael Arlen went down the bob-run at St. Moritz in 1928 with Major Cecil Pim's team. I always knew that Mr. Arlen had many accomplishments—clever writing, knowledge of high finance (especially American), brilliant repartee, and sartorial elegance—but was unaware of this other achievement.

I feel rather shy when writing about Cannes, for his presence always hovers over it. And Mr. Arlen lives in Cannes. Yes, he lives in Cannes (he always repeats the last words of his sentences), and he is of a critical nature. Yet diffidence vanishes on the golf course at Mandelieu, where I claim superiority in spite of his lengthy drives. This course is the paradise of the short, straight player; the avenues of pine-trees insist upon direction more than distance.

I wish I had changed shoes with Mr. Arlen the other day. He would have written you a Cannes letter and you would have been thoroughly delighted, and I should have gone in his place to Monte Carlo where they play *trente-et-quarante*, and won 78,000 francs, and I should have been thoroughly delighted. It seems that the only person who would not have been so delighted is Mr. Arlen himself.

He started off with 500 francs, and has certainly registered a reasonable victory over the remorseless rakes of the croupiers. And he has bought his wife a large ruby-and-diamond bracelet, and for himself a new set of those dark blue plus-fours which are known on all the golf courses of the Riviera.

Never will you find Lord Beaverbrook in the gambling rooms: he will be sitting quietly in a corner of the bar at

a table, to which there drifts automatically every personality of importance. His own particular entourage will include Captain "Mike" Wardell, managing director of the *Evening Standard*, whose opinion is of much more weight now in Fleet Street than ever it was in his Cavalry officer days or as a visitor to the "Horseback Halls" of the shires.

Mr. Brendan Bracken, one of the proprietors of the *Financial News* and the Conservative Member for North Paddington, will be sure to be shaking his shock of red hair in assertion of a vital political point. "I'm sure you're right, Brendan. I agree," will be the verdict from the chair, to which will be added, "Where's Valentine? Have you seen him? Is he playing?"

One interposes quickly that the portly Viscount is in magnificent plumage as he wanders round the roulette tables chancing only an occasional chip, followed by a bevy of admiring beauty. And it is a splendid sight to see Lord Castlerosse emerging from the Carlton Hotel in the morning, his large expanse of white waistcoat enhanced by a broad dark cherry-coloured tie, button-hole, cigar, malacca cane—he's off to lunch at Nice, of course escorting the two most lovely girls in Cannes. The outdoor concierges veritably tear off their caps in homage as they assist his imposing climb into the most splendid car the Municipality can produce. "I want to hire a car like Lord Castlerosse's," says Lord Beaverbrook (pronouncing it "Casselrosse"). "Very sorry, my lord, but his is the best car in the town—there isn't another like it," they proudly reply.

Mr. Michael Arlen is sure to approach the Beaverbrook table with some pithy news; you will hear the piping small voice of Mr. H. G. Wells, down for the evening

from his villa at Grasse, but there is nothing small about Mr. Wells when he puts pen to paper.

Mr. Simon Marks will come and sit quietly down, and as quietly and unobtrusively elucidate the trend of industry. He looks pale always, and rather sad, with a wistful, dreamy expression on his face. But you need not feel sorry for him: he is happy, thoroughly enjoys life, is very musical, has an acute sense of humour, and, judging from the strength to strength with which Marks and Spencer progresses, must possess one of the finest industrial brains in the world. I see the directors and their sons (they are a huge united family business) often at luncheon in the Dorchester, in London.

If you want a safe bet, sit there in the lounge about one o'clock and wait for one of them to come in. Then swiftly lay three to one on any of the following arrivals within the next ten minutes—Messrs. Israel, Michael, or Marcus Sieff, Mr. Norman Laski, Mr. Harry Sacher or Mr. Simon Marks.

You will often see Fritz Kreisler here in the gambling rooms as well as performing in the opera house, also in the Casino building. The Emperor of violinists is one of the most delightful characters the world of music has ever produced. Watch him approach a roulette table. Temporarily banish all thoughts of an exquisitely mature rendering of Chausson's "Poème" for violin and orchestra, and see instead a boyish gleam in his face. As if it were a schoolroom prank he surreptitiously puts the minimum stake on a number, then turns quickly round, looking in the opposite direction as if to delude himself into thinking that he is not gambling. But about two or three times a year he has a rare "crack" at the *trente-et-quarante* tables at Monte Carlo, usually with success.

In the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, the dance-band leader Henry Hall once approached Kreisler: "Will you come and hear my band? I think you'll like some of the numbers." Kreisler nodded assent. On the boat crossing from Kingstown to Holyhead, Henry Hall asked: "And what did you think of my performance?" to which Kreisler politely replied: "Well, Mr. Hall, I think there's still room for both of us."

Cannes always attracts the newspaper magnates. Lord Kemsley and Lord Iliffe have their yachts in the harbour: allies in business, they have friendly competition in the shooting world, at Hall Barn and Basildon respectively. Lady Kemsley has that tall grace and distinction which the French admire so much—but then she is French, so is Mme Mathis, wife of the constructor of the Mat-Ford car, known all over France. Her clothes are the envy of Englishwomen, so are those worn by two Americans, Baroness Lillian von Matsch and Mrs. Harriet Harriman, both silver-haired, not always quite so silver-voiced, and never lacking in male escorts.

Mr. Beverley Baxter, the spokesman of Allied Newspapers (I expect as "Atticus" he may give us a few words on Cannes in the *Sunday Times*), is his most voluble and vulverable self on the Mandelieu golf-course. Make a match with him there, for you are likely to defeat him on his handicap: with pen or voice he will beat you—his journalistic and Parliamentary careers ensure that. Fortunately his message is for men, not half-men, like some of the modern writers.

To a French visitor I was able to point out at the big table two of the younger generation of the Raphael family. He was surprised, rather, that young Englishmen with allowances from their parents (his point of view

was that they had not earned the money themselves) should gamble as highly. Yet a man like Mr. Mark Ostrer, who has built up his own success in the world, earns great respect in all casinos, for though they may play high, both he and his wife are just as delightful whether winning or losing. Mrs. Mark Ostrer sits at the big table sweetly and demurely, really thinking much more about her children asleep in the Carlton Hotel than whether a nice *neuf* will turn up for her in the cards.

* * * *

"*Possunt, quia posse videntur*" is the summer motto of lovely mannequins and show-girls. A roughish translation might be "They 'Cannes' because they believe that they 'Cannes'," with certain apologies to Virgil's fifth book of the *Aeneid*, the best and easiest to translate of that collection.

Personally I am a bad beach-boy, and will willingly cede my portion of the Eden Rock to the last-joined junior. Though I must own to missing such delights as speed-boating, bathing from a private rock, and cool, long, lengthy luncheons at Sartori's Garoupe Beach Restaurant at Cap-d'Antibes. At the "Coq-d'or" in Stratton Street (they have the best roast chicken in London) Sartori gives me such good lessons in the art of appreciating claret and burgundy. He started off his career in the restaurant world at Ciro's Grill, Monte Carlo, in 1900. Ciro himself was a Neapolitan, and among his first patrons was Mr. James Gordon Bennett, who also founded Savini's in the "Galleria" of Milan.

Nor do I say "no" to an invitation to stay peacefully in Mr. Stathartos' villa on the hill above the town, where the cool sea breezes can gently rock the cypress

trees to a whispering slumber. I may hear in my dreams a "Get up you lazy man and take me down to bathe" from Mrs. Scott-Callingham, but even she would leave me in a state like Gallio, caring for none of such things.

The thought that Sir Connop Guthrie was taking his 700-ton sailing-yacht *Creole* for a cruise from Cannes to Corsica and onwards, and me as one of his passengers, would bring me with great speed to the harbour: he is such a cheerful encouraging personality, with quick-fire brain and conversation.

The world of finance is always the brighter for a striking character like Sir Connop. His activities are enormous and his interests very wide, and his success at anything he handles is becoming a by-word. In certain things luck may play a big part, but there has to be some sterling initial thought before luck can add its winning stroke. Beneath Sir Connop's banner of optimism many qualms must be banished. He should change the family motto to: "*Nil desperandum, Guthrie duce et auspice Guthrie.*"

Otherwise I do not like excessive sun and the indolent life which it necessarily induces. I do not like the lack of exercise, the plethora of cocktails, the *potins*, incidents, rows, petty jealousies and losses of temper seemingly so inseparable from this period of relaxation from the graver social duties of the season. And I am quite aware that most of those who assemble in the Riviera for the International Drinking Season, as Michael Arlen so cleverly termed it, have no particular liking for me.

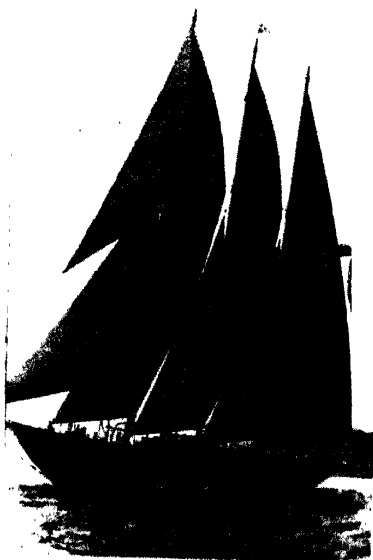
Therefore I am quite content to take its pulse in cooler climes by reading the comments of Lord Donegall, or to learn the price of everything (even down to the ultimate dissolution of melon-rinds) from Mr. Charles Graves, who must keep an encyclopædia in his brain,



BATHING POOL AT THE VILLA MAURESQUE.
MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM (WITH SUN-HAT)
AND MR. CHARLES EVANS.



MR. LESLIE MORE-BELISHA ON
THE MANDELIRU COURSE.



SIR CONNOP GUTHRIE'S
700-TON SAILING YACHT
"CREOLE."



SIR HUGO DE BATHE.

AT THE
GAROOF
BEACH—
RESTAU-
RATEURS
AT EASE—
MESSRS.
JUSTE,
QUAGLINO,
SARTORI
AND
COCHIS.



who has the nose of a pointer for news, and an admiration for the aristocracy to give the right blend to a personal column.

Mr. Erskine Gwynne, that Peter Pan of journalism who looks almost as young as when he was at Uppingham twenty-five years ago, is duly critical from the American angle of International Society in the *New York Herald*, and the summer season on the Riviera is the only one which ever lures to Europe the ace columnist in social journalism, Mr. Maury Paul, famous all over America as "Cholly Knickerbocker." For which reason alone I know that I am missing something in my default.

LONDON

April

THE RETURN to England is a moment of mingled sadness and joy. The sadness consists in sighing for the return of the pleasanter moments of one's journey (happiness is often in retrospect), and the joy comes with the knowledge that one is out of range of the croupier's rakes.

There is no better prelude to adventure, of which there is plenty on the Côte d'Azur, than that early morning peep from the Blue Train as it moves out of Toulon on its way along the coast. One sees wisteria-covered white houses and exotic foliage surmounted by palm-trees. On one side of the railway line are peasants toiling industriously in the fields; on the other is the shimmer of the sun on a calm sea, whose colours run the gamut from violet to aquamarine. Over all floats a haze of azure blue. Such is the promise of a perfect Riviera morning.

Still there remains a foreign flavour in the *pot-pourri* which follows: our concerted little medley must derive its tunes from Milan, San Remo, Monte Carlo, Cannes and Paris.

It was as the Simplon express was drawing into Milan that I remarked we were just arriving at that city, to which my companion replied, "Oh, no—we've only got as far as Olio Sasso; I've just seen the name on the station". Travellers in Italy will appreciate the profuse advertisements which this oil company employs.

In Giannino's restaurant in Milan you walk through the kitchens and see your tagliatelli, spaghetti, ravioli, fish, meat, and pastries all in preparation for the table.

Its only fault is that it is so full as to be uncomfortably crowded.

Usually I go to Savini's in the "Galleria" for luncheon, else to the "Principe e Savoia," and always do I stay at the Excelsior Gallia Hotel; besides being modern and very comfortable, it has a concierge staff which is incomparable. If you ever find it difficult to get into a performance at La Scala, they rarely fail to find you tickets.

San Remo can be certainly recommended if you like the luxury life of a Casino town without any social complications. You can play *trente-et-quarante*, too, the game at which the gambler on even-money chances is always said to possess the best chance.

Quite a number of people who play this game have no idea what happens with the cards. The top line which is dealt out by the croupier belongs to black, and the bottom to red. The nearest to thirty wins it, so if, for example, black comes out thirty-seven and red thirty-two, the croupier calls out, "*Rouge gagne, couleur perd*," and if you are wise you will then continue on red. Always follow the run of the cards: it is most dangerous to oppose even a long sequence.

At this game you can also put your money in the middle of the table on a mysterious sign called "*Inverse*", over which one seems entirely dependent on the kindness of the croupiers. On certain occasions, too, they will inform you that you are *en prison*, which is quite a local arrangement. At San Remo there was no "prison": at Monte Carlo I lived in it.

At ten o'clock this morning will depart my last temporary link with Monte Carlo, for at that hour they draw the lottery, organised of course by the Casino. A green-eyed beauty with reddish hair, ably assisted by

henna (to give that *la rousse* effect which is so popular), was in charge of the ticket office, and in persuasive mood assured me that I had a winning chance at odds of six to one against—was that not very reasonable?

The thought of returning to Monte Carlo to draw six million francs seemed most reasonable.

Claridge's will soon be welcoming Charles back from Cannes, where he is the *maître d'hôtel* at the Carlton Hotel during the winter season. This hotel is the mainspring of life in Cannes. Never fail to eat in its restaurant the excellent *friture du pays*. It consists of fresh sardines and anchovies (guiltless of any oil), little mackerel, and small soles the length of your finger.

And they serve Burgundy in big thin glasses each with a span of ten inches, and have some genuine green Chartreuse: excellent news for lovers of this liqueur is that the monks of this Order are probably coming back again very soon to France.

In Paris I went to the Salle Pleyel to hear Mr. Sidney Beer's concert with the Paris Philharmonic Society. Heifetz was the soloist in the Brahms violin concerto, and judging by the applause, Paris had never heard better violin-playing.

In the cemetery of Père Lachaise is the Pleyel family tomb. When gazing at it a visitor once remarked, "*Qu'ils ont fait de bruit dans leur vie!*" For their pianos have gaily echoed through France for over a hundred years: Cortot will use no other make.

Mr. Beer has, in racing parlance, come on about two stone. He has developed a great personality and some mannerisms at the conductor's desk, has that control of his orchestra which enables him to have that calm and confident authority which previously was lacking,

and has profited very much by his Continental training. He has lately been in Hollywood, whither I, too, would like to go to see some of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer stars at play.

Both in Hollywood and New York his friends would try to lay even such extravagant odds as twenty to one on Mr. Beer mentioning the names of either Toscanini or Furtwängler in his first three sentences, should the subject be music. After a very short time there were no "takers" at all: the bet was too much of a certainty.

On a recent visit to London he was interviewed by a reporter who questioned him on his virtues and failings as a conductor. Too modest to enlarge upon the former, with regard to the latter he replied: "An excess of temperament and passion. Romance is not encouraged in England; it is the prerogative of the foreigner. That's why so many young married women travel abroad alone."

I attended the Opéra-Comique to hear *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Debussy's too lengthy work: dinner at Larue's fortunately made me miss two of the four acts. It is a queer ghostly opera (Maeterlinck's words are unrivalled in lyrical beauty), with that poor pig-widgeon of a Mélisande, princess of all ninny-hammers. Lisa Perli succeeded in giving just the eerie, fey rendering which is wanted.

It was of this opera that the story is told of an opera company touring in the Middle West: on the first night they gave *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Pagliacci*, duly cheered by the big boys of Medicine Hat. On the next evening *Pelléas et Mélisande* received its due applause, which suddenly changed to torrents of abuse. The disturbance arose from the fact that, having had a double bill on the

previous evening the audience was disgusted only to hear *Pelléas*, and loudly demanded for the company to play *Mélisande*.

One of the more worrying letters from the inevitable batch of such which greeted me on my return was from the secretary of the Pekingese Club (I own two magnificent specimens) regretting that my offer for a special prize for the most comic dog in the show could not be accepted.

Was I aware of Kennel Club show regulations, par. 21? No, because in the book-bag which I take on my travels are included such works as *Trivia*, *The Poet's Walk*, *The Short Stories of H. G. Wells*, *The Major Pleasures of Life*, *Baedeker*, some new novels, books of reference, but no Kennel Club regulations.

"A week ago I breathed the Italian air—
And yet, methinks this northern Spring is fair."

If one may slightly misquote Oscar Wilde by the substitution of "week" for "year," and utter the words with the tongue rather in the cheek.

In the monastery of Altamura, which I suspect was reputed to have been located on a plateau in the wind-grieved Apennines, April was the month for the worship of Youth and the Dawn of Life, as well as for the awakening of thought. Even I am alive to the signs; yesterday I met a "stop me" tricycle in the street, sure harbinger of English Springtime.

IN SEARCH OF SUN

Second Year

AIX-LES-BAINS, LEADING TO LIDO, VENICE AND VILLA
D'ESTE

AIX-LES-BAINS, SAVOY

August

ALL WENT according to plan with my journey "abroad," that delightful term which covers anything from a day trip to Boulogne to a three-years' search for rare orchids on the Tibetan plains. British Airways deposited me swiftly, calmly and quietly at Le Bourget: their Lockheed aeroplanes average $1\frac{1}{4}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours for the 200-mile journey. I dined *tranquillement* at the Hôtel George V, of which the bar was full as usual, and where American voices prevailed.

Invariably at the greater Parisian railway termini does one see a first-class-looking girl embrace a second-class-looking man as he gets into a third-class carriage; the reverse order never seems to happen. The other night at the Gare de Lyon was no exception.

The excellence of my dinner put me in the right mood for being put into the wrong train, which luckily meant that instead of being wakened with the mountain goats in Haute-Savoie, I was left at Bellegarde at Everyman's hour of eight o'clock. Moreover, I had time to see the Falls of the Rhône, which river, after leaving the Lake of Geneva, descends through a gorge with such incredible rapidity that I was not even tempted to fish in it.

Here in Aix the mountain and lake scenery is perfect, and the weather is, and has been for the past two months, absolutely what we consider unsurpassable—warm and sunny all day, with a cool breeze from the Lac du Bourget in the evenings. The view from the Hôtel

Splendide, which goes automatically into my list on all counts as one of the best hotels in Europe, is the type in which descriptive writers revel—the town and the lake below in the valley, with the mountains opposite.

I hear that a medal is being struck by Senator Mollard, the Mayor, as a present for the most regular visitor to Aix. Those in the running include Lord Baldwin, Sir Felix Cassel, the Aga Khan and Captain Dennis Larking, who introduced the "cocktail party" to Roman Society in 1919 when he was Naval Attaché at the Embassy there. I happened to be present when a lovely *Contessa* "knocked back" the repeat of her first dry Martini. The transformation scene at the Lyceum pantomime is a minor effect when compared with her expression: such sensations must have been Isolde's when, on that sea voyage from Ireland to Cornwall, Brangane produced this cocktail (the first recorded in history) which was really the prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*.

Cyclamen is the *fleur du pays*. Its odour is soft and rather sad, tinged with the restful melancholy of the mountains of Savoie. But this hint of sadness can really be a delight for those who seek repose: nobody wants to "racket" all the time. And the French, outwardly such a gay nation, for their days of leisure choose supreme comfort, allied to calm and the possibility of gaiety if needed. There are *plages* on the Lac du Bourget where bourgeois nudity may be seen in profusion and avoided if required.

In the beautiful new Casino you can lose your money in the most pleasant (and very well ventilated) rooms that I have seen. The baths here are certainly as good as any in France; they were constructed three years ago, after

experts had copied the best innovations from the principal health resorts in Europe. The Etablissement Thermal is built on the site of the house inhabited by the great French poet, Lamartine:

*"Tombez, larmes silencieuses,
Sur une terre sans pitié . . ."*

You may recall these lines of the poet, or probably may not: I certainly did not until I was reminded of them by looking them up in a book of his poetry.

For those who read French and have never studied the works of Lamartine, there is a treat in store. My visit to Aix-les-Bains has awakened a love for the works of this great romanticist, whose poems were such an influence upon that musical pivot of the nineteenth century, Franz Liszt. From the poet's *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* came the inspiration for Liszt's piano works of the same name: the *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la Solitude* will have a much deeper significance after studying this poem.

Le Soir and *Le Lac* are the two poems of which much is talked and which few have read:

*"Le soir ramène le silence . . .
Je suis dans le vague des airs,
Le char de la nuit qui s'avance."*

The statue of Lamartine watches over the lake: roads and villas are called after him, and I saw, too, a "Villa Elvire," after the name of his great love who died in his early manhood.

The Lac du Bourget is said to contain the most fish of any lake in France: giant carp, trout, and pike are taken occasionally on rod and line, but the tackle used is so

often too feeble to land the big fish. There are shoals of perch, which are as succulent to eat as any trout, and there are dace in millions which will provide a good two hours' sport at dawn, always the best time for coarse fishing.

It is a most dangerous lake, too, and has a sinister reputation. You may be out on a glassy surface, and within ten minutes a wind from certain clefts in the mountains will cause terrible whirlpools, the result of wind against current. But if you go with a professional boatman you should be quite safe, for they have, I believe, never been known to have an accident.

M. Guy Huard, the champion ski-er of Savoie (a very high honour), an expert mountaineer and boatman, too, once had his boat fill and sink in under a minute because he could not get the anchor up in time; he had to swim to the shore.

M. Huard the other evening lost in succession five huge carp in the lake; they just took out 150 yards of line and smashed his gut: each fish must have been in the "twenties." And he says that if you use thicker gut they will not bite. I am consulting the brothers Ogden Smith in St. James's Street, upon my return, on how to deal with the situation, and I am expecting Dr. Lewis Smith ("Silver Doctor") and Dr. Gordon Reeve to be here by the next train to see what it's all about.

There is splendid trout-fishing in the mountains, though some of the descents to the water are most precipitous: you have to be lowered down on a rope to get to some of the best water in the rocky gorges.

From the Marquis de Tracy, of *La Noblesse Millénaire* (the French nobility whose direct line of descent has been unbroken for a thousand years), I heard of the giant blackcock which haunt the forests on the tops

of the Savoy mountains: the shooting is very strictly preserved. His own estate in the centre of France lies on one of the lines of the migration of wild-duck, which fly across France down to Spain and North Africa from the northern countries. The birds follow three or four lines, not always regularly enough to invite guests for a set shoot, and never quite on the expected days; but once "Le Passage" begins you have some wonderful shooting if you hit it off right. One of the lines is from Le Touquet over the marches of the Somme by Abbeville, making towards Bordeaux and the *étangs* of the Landes country; another line goes down the middle of France, hitting off the Rhône valley.

My opponents on the Golf Course were usually Mr. Evelyn Fitz-Gerald and sometimes M. Dmitri Sursock, brother of the Princess Colonna in Rome; with him I had a duel which ended in one of my infrequent wins. I am glad I did not have a duel such as he once fought with rapiers (somebody had made a disparaging remark about his sister) for one hour and a half, when both combatants retired from sheer exhaustion: the seconds had made the conditions too strenuous for either party.

To-morrow my way lies through Modane to Milan, the vantage point of Northern Italy: Lido, Venice and Villa d'Este are on the itinerary card. I shall miss much here—dawns on the lake (for once not in the Casino), fishing for perch and dace, the ensuing "*bon appétit*" for the luncheons at the Splendide (usually fish from the lake, local fruit and vegetables) and the restorative powers of its *Fine Maison*, which fulfils its true *métier* by remaining since fifty years ago in a huge cask in the cellar, and being added to annually. For two hours of the afternoon there is "sweet repose," at four

o'clock a game of golf and daily defeat from Mr. Evelyn Fitz-Gerald, the sun setting over mountains and lake. . . . Could the influence of Lamartine move me to composition as it did Liszt, I would remain for ever a lotus-eater by the Lac du Bourget.

LIDO

August

TO REACH the Lido one must first go to Venice. And so to the pearl of the Adriatic do I tender humble apologies for presuming to write about its island-suburb before uttering a word of praise for the city, in describing which romantic novelists and poets have excelled themselves. Yet the ageing Queen of the Adriatic, Venice, sits and watches the shiploads of passengers which stream down the Grand Canal on their journey to that narrow strip of land, the Lido. She watches them with the air of a dowager duchess, driving in her park in a slow and stately barouche, past whom come her grandchildren, whizzing along in fast, flashy cars.

But Venice spreads her spell in the evenings, when her palaces and green canals are fading into the darkness and the great bells swinging in their campaniles send the melancholy magic of their voices far over the lagoons.

The cult of the bath or bathe, apart from its cleansing properties, was an especial prerogative of the ancient Romans: it is therefore appropriate that the Lido, which gives its name to almost any aquatic spot where two or three or more may be gathered together for swimming, should be located in Italy.

Description of the beauties of the Lido can be very short—for there are none. It is just a bank of land which breaks the flow of the Adriatic towards Venice; it is the sea-bathing resort not only of Venetians but of every mid-European country too; it is about a quarter of an

hour in a motor-boat from Venice, and is dominated by a huge hotel, the Excelsior. And its 700 bedrooms are full during August and the beginning of September.

The hotel, in its turn, is dominated during the season by Princess Jane di San Faustino, who, although over seventy years old, organises all the big galas for charity, directs the social politics of the neighbourhood, and has a passion for backgammon. Every morning at eleven-thirty she holds a court, sitting outside her *capanna* (bathing hut), a very imposing figure with her white hair and long, flowing white dress. Friends regale her with all the news of the previous evening, and upon their information does she deliver judgment upon new visitors. If "socially O.K." they are invited to her parties, must attend the court each morning, and are given a good reference to the Countess Morosini, who rules correspondingly in Venice.

And at two-thirty punctually in the afternoon Princess Jane sits down outside her *capanna* and issues summonses to play backgammon, and woe betide delinquents to the call. For she voices her opinion in no uncertain manner, and she is American. So are many wives of the Italian nobility—for instance, Princess Chito di Bitteto, Princess Torlonia, Countess Zoppola, and Countess Frasso.

Having completed the 177-mile journey from Milan to Venice in the Fiat motor-train in 2½ hours (even the mighty Simplon-Orient takes nearly four hours), the Excelsior's motor-boat ran me across the lagoons in another half-hour. Unlike Mr. William Randolph Hearst, I prefer the quicker means of transport, for he is faithful to the gondola even for a long journey. When he arrived with his entourage at Venice station, twenty gondolas were ready to move his party and 120 pieces of

luggage to the Lido. And one gondola provided mandolines and songs all the way across: even the greatest music-lover would tire of "*Luci, Lucia*" and "*Maria, Mari*" alternately for two hours.

All was the same on the Lido beach as when I left it two years ago: the fruit man was selling his figs, peaches and grapes, and Princess Jane di San Faustino was playing backgammon. "Go away, go away, I'm losing," was her greeting, which altered to: "Do come back: I want to tell you about my wonderful party for charity. It's been the best Lido season for twenty years. And I want to hear all about my Egyptian. Why were you all so unkind about him?"

I murmured that I was not guilty, but had to acknowledge that the Egyptian was certainly the most mysterious personality I have ever met in my wanderings.

In the background Prince Chito di Bitteto was arranging the order of precedence for a big luncheon party: he is a great expert on this point, as Parisian society well knows. Kathleen Lady Drogheda, Mrs. de Winton Wills, Mrs. Quintin Gilbey, and Baron Maurice de Rothschild were familiar faces, the last-named not looking his best in a bathing suit, which certainly did not add credit to his great wealth.

The day's programme on the Lido is not strenuous: there are tennis courts, though except during this week, when the tournament is in progress, I have rarely seen them used. Nearly all the young men in the hotel have entered the tournament, as it entitles them to the reduced *en pension* terms allowed to players. After all, as they say themselves, it takes a very short time to be beaten 6-0, 6-0, and the tournament lasts a week.

Bathing in the sea and in the sun occupies the morning,

assisted by eating the lovely green fresh figs which are one of the best local products. After a light luncheon there are bridge, backgammon, gossip, and more sun-bathing on the beach; towards five o'clock people retire to dress, preparatory to going into Venice for the evening. For there is nothing to do here after sunset, except on gala nights, which are the same as any other gala nights. Though do not let us forget the Casino. To me all casinos are alike, being only interested if there is a run on the red; which reminds me that they play *trente-et-quarante* here, a game in which there is always the hope of a long run.

As regards dress, women have their multitudinous beach-dresses of every hue, and men are content with ordinary bathing-suits when on the beach; otherwise flannels and short-sleeved jerseys, blue for preference, and hardly ever a hat. Almost do I fancy myself as a beach-boy, duly fitted out in Conduit Street by Mr. A. J. Izod before leaving with a selection of his latest "Dozis," as his particular brand of short-sleeved jersey is called.

Mr. Cecil Beaton races up and down the foreshore each morning to see if his friend Mr. Peter Watson is about, stopping to buy a fig for Miss Olga Lynn, or to bid "good morning" to the posse of princesses. Here his clothes conform to Lido standards: to see him at his sartorial best let me quote from an American contemporary on welcoming Mr. Beaton back to New York.

"The languid photographer of folk who count is back in Town bravely carrying the torch for clothes that set Manhattan's lorgnettes a-quiver. He showed up at the Colony for luncheon in a little number which Lanvin had run up for him in a pale shade of apple-green, with a darker green waistcoat, double-breasted, and

buttoned with gold-and-emerald links. Next day he wore an old-fashioned four-button jacket of the sort that used to be known as the regulation Brooks steam-heated suit. First-nighters breathed more easily when he appeared in a box with Elsa Maxwell, in just a plain black dinner suit. There had been advance murmurs of ruffles at the cuffs and a magenta waistcoat."

Never be deluded into thinking that there are no mosquitoes at the Lido: these pests do not bite their fellow-countrymen, yet play havoc with anybody else, and a net is most advisable to compete with them at night. Also arm yourself with several of those small bottles of "Pipiol," which really removes the inflammation from stings.

But mosquitoes are the only things in Italy which do bite us. I am continually being much impressed with the friendliness towards us on the part of all Italians. And never have I found it so easy to get money: never before have I had a bank manager *offer* to lend me money, which is what I thought happened in the Banco di Roma in Milan, and I have a fair understanding of the language.

The season at the Lido, like most beach seasons, draws to a close towards the second week in September, though Venice has a musical season which follows its only energetic event of the year—the gondoliers' race on the Grand Canal, to be held on Sunday and to be won, as usual, by the same gondolier as in the past fifteen years.

You cannot get a bet on the race: but I will bet that the best "turn-out" on the Lido is that of the Contessa Bezzi-Scali, one of the most attractive members of Roman society.

VENICE

September

NO TRAVELLER should enter Venice unarmed. But the arms to be carried are weapons not to deal with force or violence but with the pages of history which envelop the personality of the Venus of the Adriatic, and which must be rolled aside through the medium of great writers.

Baedeker teaches you how to see the city in four days: *Ruskin*, in *Stones of Venice*, counsels hours of study of the paintings of *Tintoretto*, *Veronese*, and *Bellini*: *E. V. Lucas*, in *A Wanderer in Venice*, advises me to do all the things which I love to do and should never have thought of without his help. *Oscar Wilde* says that the whole of Venice lies in two lines of *Théophile Gautier*:

*"Devant une façade rose,
Sur le marbre d'un escalier."*

And he adds that on reading this and the subsequent stanzas "one seems to be floating down the green waterways of the pink-and-pearl city, seated in a black gondola with silver prow and trailing curtains."

In the fading light at about seven o'clock, just about the time you will be crossing from the Lido Venice, with the Venetian Alps in the background, looks her most romantic—"Sortant de l'eau son corps rose et blanc." A drink at *Harry's Bar* on the Grand Canal will transport you at once to the atmosphere of any other bar at any luxury resort. Dispensing with this I wander slowly from the *Danieli Hotel*, where our motor-boat leaves us,

to the Piazza San Marco, and sit in meditation upon the question of dinner. This usually develops into telling a *rampino* (local waterman) to call out "Puppe!" when a gondola will appear; even though the Taverna restaurant is reasonably close, it is more pleasant to arrive there feeling cool for dinner.

It all seems just the same here now as when Tchekov described it forty years ago; and, for that matter, the same as 400 years ago:

"In the evening we ate *scampi*, drank wine, and went out in a gondola. I remember our black gondola swayed softly in the same place while the water faintly gurgled under it, then it glided off with feminine grace, smoothly and majestically as though it were alive. There was a smell of the sea: here and there the reflection of the stars and the lights on the bank quivered and trembled. Not far from us, in a gondola hung with coloured lanterns which were reflected in the water, there were people singing. The sounds of guitars, of violins, of mandolins, of men's and women's voices, were audible in the dark."

The food at the Taverna is good, and you sit outside and eat it in the open square. Occupants of the neighbouring houses open their windows and peer down to inspect you, while wandering musicians and singers regale you with "*Maria, Mari.*" It seems to be the signature tune of the city.

Begin your meal (and this applies to any meal in Italy) with Parma ham, sliced as thin as tissue-paper, with a piece of iced melon. If you are really hungry, which I rarely am in hot countries, have some *minestrone* soup and then select from the following fish: *Scampi* (minute form of lobster), *calamaretti*, *triglia*, *tinca*, *branzino*, *trota di*

lago (lake trout), *nasello livornese*. Some of these are local fish from the canal—all fish is good in Venice. For meats try *fritto misto*, *risotto Milanese*, *piccata alla Romana*, *côtelette alla sassi*, and *osso buco alla Milanese*.

You will get no shocks in ordering any of these fish or meats, even if you are not sure what they are. Follow this with some fresh fruit or pastries, "express" coffee, and a glass of *strega*. For wine drink *soave* (white) or *grignolino* (red) with some San Pellegrino water in another glass—all well iced.

Let us look round to see whom we can recognise. There are M. and Mme Sert dining with Mr. and Mrs. Denis Conan-Doyle (she was Princess Nina Mdivani) and Mr. Peter Watson: Signor de Facci Negrati, that very popular attaché in the Italian Embassy in London; Mr. Ralph Hall Caine, M.P. for East Dorset; the Duke of Alba, with his famous black pearls in his evening shirt, and the Duke de Laurino, who was married to one of the Joel family, and whose white plus-fours with hearts on the knees are such a familiar sight in all Italian summer resorts.

There is not much to do after dinner. In any case you should be tired after your round of the picture galleries, churches, *palazzi*, glass-blowing factories, or exertions on the Lido beach; it is a choice between a gondola and sitting in the Piazza San Marco listening to the band. And as there is no band this evening we will journey, with ruminations (not strictly consecutive), down the Grand Canal.

Across the Canal by the Church of Santa Maria della Salute is moored an illuminated gondola, from which the music sounds better in the distance than close by. Away up on the right bank is the Palazzo Vendramin,

where Wagner came to die. He had lived in the Sernagiotto Palace twenty-five years before; here was written the second act of *Tristan und Isolde*. Browning, too, died here in the Palazzo Rezzonico; Byron lived for some time in the Palazzo Mocenigo, the home of Conte Andrea de Robilant, one of the best-looking men in Italy, and now married to Alanova, the dancer. In the upper part of this building Byron wrote *Don Juan*.

Further down from the Mocenigo palace is the Barbaro palace, opposite which is that of Princess de Polignac. It was here that, some years ago, the guests, arriving at the steps in the gondolas, found chickens and fish floating down the canal to greet them there instead of on the dinner table: Major Ralph Peto can tell the story, if only you could persuade him.

The next *palazzo* is that of Toti del Monte, the great *coloratura* soprano, and below it that of Contessa Morosini, who rules Venetian society, and has been appointed Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen of Italy. And the last *palazzo* before the Church of Santa Maria is that of the Mdivani family, formerly an old Benedictine Abbey. And the Mdivanis are the fourth family who have occupied it to whom ill-luck has come during their tenancy.

We pass back by the Grand Hotel, of which the royal suite is as famous as it is expensive, and two places of very different character—Harry's Bar and the Doge's Palace—as far as the Hotel Danieli, where the motor-launch waits to take us back to the Lido. The cool sea breezes will soon lull us to sleep.

* * * *

Gondoliers Day on the Grand Canal makes Venice, for

once, almost practically-minded, for the rest of the time the city stands (or floats) as a wonderful museum with a background of incredible romantic beauty, which well suits the lazy nature of the Venetian. One must never hurry gondoliers, they will tell you, but on Gondola Day they not only hustle about, they actually race.

Certainly there is only one race, to which the whole afternoon is given, but they have a lovely parade before it. Looking out across the Canal from the balcony of Palazzo Mocenigo, I can see the Duke of Genoa on the dais opposite: he has come off his flagship, and is representing the King of Italy. Count Volpi, the former Minister of Finance, has a large party watching the pageant.

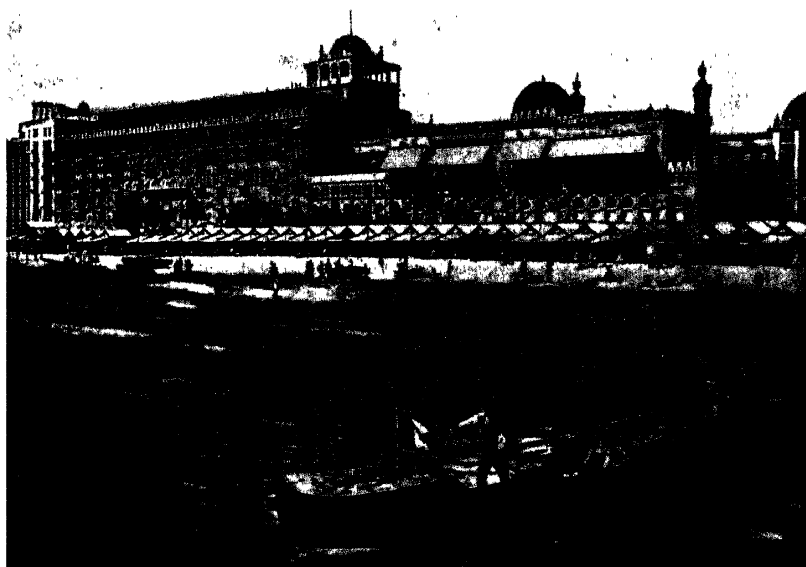
Princess Jane di San Faustino is there, Sylvia Lady Poulett and Lady Bridget Poulett, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Arlen, and Princess Jean de Faucigny-Lucinge, whose two children are on the Palazzo Mocenigo balcony, as are Lord Elveden (the Italians cannot make out why it is pronounced Elden), Lady Dufferin and Ava, and Lord and Lady Charles Cavendish; she seemed most excited, exclaiming: "Oh, I do wish I hadn't said Venice was like Coney Island when I got here yesterday—it's just the loveliest place I've ever seen."

It was the matriarch of a Jewish family who once made the famous remark about Venice, having inspected everything that a guide could show her. "What do you think of Venice?" her family asked. "Very nice place," she replied. "But it won't last."

The gondoliers have just finished their race: the same pair won as have won for the past fifteen years, a situation after the heart of Gilbert and Sullivan. Before the races comes the procession of boats, very similar to ~~that at~~



PRINCESS DI SAN FAUSTINO. IN BACKGROUND PRINCE CHITO DI BITTETO.



EXCELSIOR HOTEL, LIDO



GON-
DOLIERS
RACE
ON THE
GRAND
CANAL,
VENICE.



MR. EDDY & SCENES.



CONTESSA BAZZI-SCALI.

Eton, except that nobody falls in. I understand that nobody has ever been involuntarily upset into the Canal. These gondoliers know their job; moreover, they know all about the interiors of their *palazzi*, and all the histories.

Princess Jane says that the reason for their knowledge is that their ancestors were the lovers of the famous Venetian beauties. One gondolier used to be smuggled out of a side door at dawn, wrapped in a rug, carried like a sack of coats and plonked in a gondola. Husbands didn't count in the days of ancient Venice. Liszt, in his *Venezia e Napoli*, included a tarantella and a gondolier's song, which has the lugubrious dignity of their race, whose ancient courtliness of manner might well be copied by modern Mayfair.

Romance lies hidden in all these houses; it is in the guise of fragrant echoes of the past, which pass before one's eyes like a kaleidoscopic record as one recalls a famous name.

It is pleasant, as one drifts down the Canal, to picture some lovely Venetian, with her black shawl, and Titian-coloured hair, sitting in regal state in one of her huge reception-rooms. However, they are usually playing bridge and drinking cocktails in quite ordinary fashion.

Venice is like an insidious dope, so much does its charm grow upon one. I intended to stay three days and have remained eight, sleeping by the sea breezes of the Lido, and spending the late afternoons and evenings in Venice.

To delineate the glories of the Doge's Palace, St. Mark's, the museums, and the beauties of Venetian glass-glowing, another six weeks of intensive study would be necessary. Not so long is needed to study the innumer-

able pigeons which circle round the *Piazza* at one-fifty-five and swoop down as the clock strikes two for their food; the countless cats; the odd odours of the lesser canals; and the mosquitoes, just now at their strongest and unhealthiest, with an intense love of nipping one's ankles at meal-times.

VILLA D'ESTE, COMO

September

TO PEN a holiday task from the above address should prove no hardship: indeed, holiday tasks rarely present any difficulties to those of cunning intent. You remember the days towards the end of the summer holidays in your youth, when not a word has been read of that book of *Georgics* allotted to your form, yet the return railway journey and the first night of the term gave that breathing space so necessary against total failure. Schoolmasters are human, and on such occasions an inkling of knowledge suffices.

Virgil is also my holiday taskmaster, for in the second book of the *Georgics* he extols the Lacus Larius, none other than our Lake Como. And so does the elder Pliny praise it; steamships on the lake are still named after him, though only the most sincere scholars ever study his prose without the imminent threat of examinations. Yet this is the third afternoon on which I have started to write about Como, and I find Como to be just about the last place in the world where one can think of doing any work.

Yesterday, after luncheon, I made excuses to Lord Hirst (he and Lady Hirst have been here every summer for twenty-five years), and said that I really must make some effort about it, and he replied: "My young friend, you are the first person that I have ever seen try to do any work when staying here—far better come out on the lake in a motor-boat." Which I did; and had it not been for

his daughter, Mrs. Leslie Gamage, slightly chiding me for indolence, there still might have been what the Army calls a *nil* return.

This hotel was, over 100 years ago, the home of Queen Caroline of England: the stables form an annexe which is a *palazzo* in itself, and the gardens have just the "lay-out" so suitable for our "greater country houses of to-day."

It takes a day or two to become acclimatised, not to the atmosphere but to the cosmopolitan "family circle" which M. Willy Dombé collects with such ease. And that is why most visitors prolong their stay; even if they have been lonely for the first few days, once they know the rest of the "family" they never want to leave.

It is an especial paradise for young American girls, of whom there are several here with their mommas and grand-mommas; average age, seventeen, pretty, neat, slick, nice-mannered, good swimmers and dancers. And they have a grand time. All the young counts and local nobility in general flock around them with much attention and hand-kissing; the romance of the Italian lakes enters into their hearts. They come first from school, then for their honeymoon, and even when meditating a divorce—and then, perhaps, for a second honeymoon. Some of their moods are as changeable as the face of the lake, giving glimpses of *cattivo tempo*; they meet their match in the Italian young men, who stand no nonsense, and it is the English *jeunesse* which "fetches and carries" the most.

And all these young Italians are great games-players; you can see them any evening on the golf course up at the Country Club, and at what a pace do they drive their Alfa-Romeos, Fiats, and Lancias on the *auto-strada* from

Como to Milan. One pays a small fee to go on these roads; there are no side turnings, no bicycles or horse-vehicles. In fact, it is just one long orgy of "all-out."

The Duke of Laurino has arrived from Venice, complete with his white plus-fours: the heart-shaped patches on the knees are said to be due to his kneeling in devotion at the feet of the lovely *Contessas*. From all sides one hears the greeting cry of "Marcello." Fortunately he speaks perfect English, and makes himself extraordinarily pleasant to everybody, and English visitors in particular. One can only add that the keynote of the Italians towards us seems to be "*senza rancore*," as Mimi said to Rudolfo in the third act of *La Bohème*.

There is one figure I miss so much here, that of Commendatore Antonio Scotti, the great baritone. Mrs. Leslie Gamage, when passing through Naples on her way to Australia, had called on Scotti in his last illness.

But he would not see any visitors; perhaps his great pride was a barrier to allowing even a dear friend to see him in a state of poverty, which was, unfortunately, the case. The only memory he wished to remain would be of himself as the *grand seigneur* of the operatic world, living in retirement at sunlit Villa d'Este, so proud of his immaculate Savile Row suits and shoes. And my last picture of him must be recalled from my previous visit here:

"What visions do the names Caruso and Scotti conjure up! I have two treasures—gramophone records of their duets, found in the local shop, and Scotti has autographed them. When night was falling these records were put on, with all of us listening by the lake-side and every waiter in the hotel hovering round our

table. It was a feeble, scratchy little machine, and the voices as they sang the duet in *La Forza del Destino* seemed so far away, which was rather appropriate. And there were tears in Scotti's eyes at the end of it as he whispered sadly: 'For sixteen years Caruso and I lived in the same hotel in New York.' "

And so they pass on, the holders of these names of which the mention will always distil an essence of magic.

"*When the white peaches give place to the yellow, summer is over,*" is an old Italian saying. We have yellow peaches every day, yet there is no sign of the summer being over, although the days draw in very fast.

My poet has changed from Lamartine to Francesco Petrarca, the greatest lyric poet of Italy, who lived among the North Italian princes of the fourteenth century. But Liszt, too, follows him, as he did Lamartine at Aix-les-Bains: there are the *Sonetti del Petrarca*, written in Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage—deuxième année—Italie*. The most beautiful, especially as played by Rachmaninoff, Horowitz, or Anatole Kitain (they are all of the same Russian school), is the 123rd sonnet, *Io vidi in terra angelici costumi*.

It is sad to think that Horowitz may not play again in public for a very long time. Anyone who has heard him play *Funérailles* will remember that hollow tone of the opening bass notes, as of a coffin being placed on trestles in the chancel. I believe that Kitain will rise to the very top ranks of pianists: he plays in exactly the same style as Horowitz (they both had the same teacher, Blumenfeld), and "gets right into" his piano, instead of keeping it at a distance, as do some of the German professors.

I have only seen one evening's rain since my visit to Italy, just when I wanted to attend an open-air

performance of the opera *Notturmo Romantico*, in the old palace of the Visconti family, the Villa L'Olmo. And there was a storm which must have upset the silk-worms in their work, for here is the centre of the silk industry. No woman comes to Lake Como without a visit to Moretti, said to be the finest silk factory in the country.

* * * *

One morning I was informed that M. Gualdi and M. Benini were waiting for me: the former was the *maitre d'hôtel* of the Embassy Club (he is now at the Monseigneur Grille) and the latter is one of the heads of the Hungaria. In a few minutes, with Benini at the wheel, we were speeding towards Lake Maggiore and Gualdi's villa at Suna, near Pallanza.

And there, as you may imagine, I had the best meal during the whole of my stay in Italy; and as for the wines, they were white and light, and red and sparkling (and still light). Unfortunately they will not travel, so they mature in the Gualdi cellar until the owner has the leisure to enjoy them.

The Hungaria is noted for its music: Benini was trained as a boy as a trumpet-player (orchestral, not brass-band variety) in Bologna, and one of his fellow-students was Respighi, the adapter of *La Boutique Fantasque* and composer of "The Fountains of Rome," who was learning to play the violin.

A trip in a motor-boat on Lake Maggiore, with a visit to Isola Bella, the home of the Borromeos (you can see the body of St. Charles Borromeo in the crypt of Milan Cathedral for 5 lire), more beautiful than ever depicted on post-cards; an introduction to the cousins Paolo

and Enrico Muzio, great political forces in the neighbourhood as well as angling experts; a glimpse at Toscanini's island, and we land at Stresa for Benini to demonstrate his prowess at chauffeurship on the *autostrada* to Como.

Another expedition was to motor over the Maloja Pass to St. Moritz, about eighty miles away from Como. The lake looks so much more delightful in summer than in winter: there is an atmosphere of calm repose about the Palace Hotel which is absent in the winter. Mr. "Billie" Reardon welcomes you, as usual, with his greeting cocktail, and I, for one, am glad to see summer girls as opposed to snow-girls.

Mr. and Mrs. Hans Badrutt, the owners of the Palace Hotel, seem to be taking a holiday, they look so happy; he is thrilled, as ever, with high hopes of the authenticity of his painting, "The Sixtine Madonna." He whispers that they are even getting nervous at Dresden, where is said to rest the original Raphael of this subject. But Mr. Badrutt has many expert arguments in his favour; if he should happen to be right, the picture is worth about a million pounds. It was bought by his grandfather from the major-domo of the D'Este family; the discussion has been going on ever since.

Whereas in Venice we saw the canals from a gondola, on Como we take to a motor-boat. The lovely villas which lie on the shores of the lake breathe an air of mystery; some of them are public, like the Villa Carlotta, between Tremezzo and Cadenabbia. Opposite lies Bellagio, where the shaded shops are as alluring as those of the carpet-sellers in Cairo.

The lake is deep just here—not much use to try to fish on the bottom for perch, for there are about seven

hundred feet of water. On the same side of the lake as Bellagio are the Villa Melzi and the Villa Giulia, as well as the Villa Serbelloni, all beautiful. But it is on a promontory opposite Bellagio that lies the villa which attracts me most.

It is called Balbianello, and belongs now to General Butler-Ames, who lives most of the year in Boston, Massachusetts. He is an inventor of some note, who, travelling in Italy before the war, was determined to become the possessor of this property.

It was owned by a very old lady, and its history in the preceding years was like that of a Verdi opera—madness, a wicked doctor, murders, suicides. It is a story in which Sir Hugh Walpole would revel: and what a wonderful title for a book—Balbianello! And added to it a picture of the villa on the paper wrapper.

During the war the old lady died, and the General got possession of the villa: there is a gardener there of over ninety who knows a good deal of its history. So does the General, but unfortunately he is away back in Boston. As we turn the boat's head towards Villa d'Este, I look back at those dark sentinel cypresses, silhouetted in the clear mountain air, and long to know what secrets they guard in Balbianello.

TURIN RAILWAY STATION

September

RATHER SADLY DO I prepare to eat my last meal in Italy before catching the Rome express; the Italian lakes must be left for those of Galway, over a thousand miles away, in a district marked in yellow on the map to denote "Irish-speaking district."

My prelude to every meal here is either a Fernet-Branca with Italian vermouth, mixed and iced, or an Americano, which is Campari-bitter mixed with Italian vermouth, ice and a slice of lemon. Spirits are not good to drink in hot countries during the daytime, though I always fall for a *strega* after luncheon.

Last evening in Milan M. Vittorio Gallia took me to a night club which has, for the lover of scenic as well as physical beauty, the best view of any in the world. It is on the top of the Odeon building owned by M. Zammaretti, and at intervals all the lights are extinguished and searchlights turned upon the cathedral, about two hundred yards away. It is better than any view that you could have in the daytime, for all the surrounding houses are cut out of the flood-lighting.

There is great rivalry between Milan and Rome: the Milanese do all the work, it is said, while the Romans reap the benefit. The best football match in the country to see is that between Rome and Milan, in which football plays a minor part.

With Commendatore Emmanuele Ricordi, the head of the great music-publishing firm, I was taken to see Monza, outside Milan, where the big motor races were

held a week or so ago. Even La Scala, the great opera house, which is closed until Boxing Day, was plastered with announcements of this meeting.

The Ricordi family have for one hundred and twenty-five years been in business in Milan: most of the great Italian operas have been published by them: look at the score of any opera written by Verdi, Puccini, Donizetti, Bellini, or Leoncavallo, for instance, and you will always find the name of Ricordi.

The Rome express has just come into the station. I must drink up my glass of Bracchetto, that sparkling red wine which comes from the Asti district, as do the Quaglino brothers, the elder of whom I missed by a short head in Suna; I must be home in time for the ninth birthday of his Bury-street restaurant.

In my Continental travels there is scarcely a hotel or a restaurant which I visit where they do not enquire after Quaglino, always with a touch of envy for the great reputation he has made. Not only is the little man one of the most successful restaurateurs, but he is also one of the most popular.

He is now pointed out as the shining example of his profession: he has achieved it by hard work and not by delegating it to others. Both he and his brother dart backwards and forwards between Quaglino's and the Apéritif Grill all the evening, so that one of the two is at each place to greet the clients. Always do I recapture a few moments of the joy of Italian wanderings when talking to them in their restaurants. And Wednesday (extension) nights at "Quag's" are looked forward to by those on leave from outposts of the Empire as much as those up for the evening from Melton Mowbray or the Cotswolds.

The man from Cook's has just poked his head in through the restaurant door: all the luggage is on board: it seems, the express is awaiting my pleasure. Even on this warm night there will be a cold breath of air into the *wagons-lits* compartment as we pass through Modane. It will be the Alps whispering *A riverderci*.

BALLINROBE, CO. MAYO, EIRE

September

NO FISHERMAN LEAVES Lough Mask without regrets, usually for the monster which he has lost. My regrets are not for the fish that I have lost, for I did not hook a giant pike, but that I had just not three more days' fishing in this sea-like lake. When you visit a place for the first time—and the West of Ireland was quite foreign to me—it is never until you are just about to leave that you discover all the wonderful things you should have done.

This is precisely what happened on this visit, but as regards the *exact* locality in Lough Mask, where my boatman acts as "harbourer" to 30-lb. and 40-lb. pike, until the demise at my hands of one of these fish, I am remaining silent. All these great Irish lakes are stacked with big pike and trout, and in the "local" in the evenings they barely bother to mention any pike under 30 lb. and any trout under 5 lb.

For the benefit of anglers one may remark that the Irish pike is an entirely different creature from his English cousin as regards behaviour. One knows that sulky sidle into the deeps of a heavy lake pike once he is hooked; there is none of that with the Lough Mask pike, who spends most of his time jumping out of the water before he comes to the gaff.

Thus does an Irish boatman talk with pride of these fish: "Fight is it? Faith, he will, sir, and bark at you and fly out of the water for you like any salmon. Look at the

tail of that fellow—'twill drive him through the water as fast as any fish: yes, and faster, for doesn't he live on other fish? 'Tis the water they live in and the food they eat makes the difference."

The water in Mask is clear, with a rocky bottom, and the pikes are brought up on trout from their nursery days. My boatman was himself a keen fisherman and had landed many pike up to 40 lb., and, of course, had been broken by monsters. One had run out all his reel-line (150 yards) in one long run, and of that fish he said he would have given ten shillings if only to have seen him.

The thought of leaving Lough Mask makes me feel about as cheerful as an anæmic on a goat's milk diet, but the stern call of duty must triumph over the siren voices of the colleens, who, I understand, are indigenous to the neighbourhood: I have yet to see the genuine article. Girls have to behave well in Ireland, otherwise the parish priest may read their names out from the pulpit on Sundays: a Mayfair vicar would never get through his service should he undertake the same task.

The three main points which I noted while motoring from Dublin to the West were:

1. The number of donkeys.
2. The hillocks in the roads (of which the surfaces are excellent), due to their being built on bogs.
3. The number of girls with red hair.

My first port of call was Sligo, whence a kind friend was to despatch me around the great lakes, armed with local knowledge. One of the smaller lakes in the vicinity had recently disappeared: local wits playfully attributed this to the search by the members of the Sligo Golf Club for water one morning, after the dinner for the captain's

prize. Rosse's Point, where the club has its links, is described as being "really tony," and certainly all the local luminaries congregate there in the evenings, and they are the soul of hospitality.

"Faith and you'll see some weird and wonderful creatures before you leave this country." And I did. At one hotel the call-board told me that No. 33 was being called at seven-fifteen a.m. with hot whisky: nor was there any mention of water or milk to be added.

And at nine-fifteen No. 33 (so I believed him to be) waddled down to breakfast: he had a very red face, and his face was even redder than usual after a shocking battle with his razor.

Some of the hotels are rather odd: in one that I passed I was told that there are eight bedrooms only, and to get to any but the first you have to pass through the other rooms. And some queer people live in them for many months in the year. From one hotel I heard the strains of Chopin's *Fantaisie Impromptu* played with more love than knowledge of the piano: the man was a recluse and rarely spoke to any other guests, shutting himself up most of the day in a little room with the piano.

I was lucky to be put into the hands of Mr. Wilbert Middleton, a big flour magnate in the Sligo district, has fished himself as an automatic selection for the Irish fishing team, for which the competition is enormous: he also has a fine pheasant shoot, a speed-boat, and looks twenty-six and not forty-six.

He looked gloomily at Lough Arrow, on which was only a gentle ripple, and said that you need waves with tips of foam on all these big lakes to make the trout rise well. However, at the first cast I had a 14 lb.

trout, which we almost put back, except that Arrow trout are said to be so good to eat.

The next move was to Lough Conn, past Ballina to Pontoon Bridge, to a scene of "woild beauty," as an Irishman described it, where the loughs Cullen and Conn join.

My boatman was of the type of Cameron in "Mary Rose"; he was helping his aunt, who owns the little hotel on the bridge, while on holiday from his medical studies in Dublin. It made me rather nervous of setting foot on one of those queer little islands which abound in these lakes: a twenty-years' interlude from this life would bring awful shocks on the return.

Previous surroundings affect one's outlook to a new place, and after Aix-les-Bains, Venice, the Lido, and Villa d'Este it certainly seemed odd here at first. But it is as when you study a new and rather unusual lesson at school: the first time it seems so strange, and the next time all the strangeness seems to have melted away.

Here in Valkenberg's Hotel, the present owner, Joe Valkenberg, showed me all the pictures of the days of Captain Boycott (1875), who lived near Ballinrobe at Lough Mask Castle. The hotel figures in some of the spectacular illustrations of the period, from which it seems that not much has altered in the town, though the hotel now has two bathrooms and you can always get a fine supply of those excellent Castlebar sausages.

At Pontoon the peat fires were alight all day long, although the sun was hot outside: there was no telephone, and altogether the atmosphere was one in which you could dilate for hours upon the deeds of the blackbird, the habits of the cormorant, and why owls make peculiar noises at night.

SUPPLEMENT TO SECOND YEAR

ROME AND FLORENCE

ROME

April

THE ROAD TO Rome is easy now; the deft use of both train and air services enables one to lessen the length of the former and the monotony of the latter. For instance after leaving Le Touquet in the afternoon I caught the Simplon-Orient express from Paris to Milan, thus disposing of the darkness. Instead of continuing on that long nine hours' journey by rail and wasting the whole day, I took the midday aeroplane from Milan to Rome, arriving at three in the afternoon. With increased air services throughout the summer, Rome is as easy of approach by day as Edinburgh. One's appearance in any Continental capital should, therefore, not deserve the inevitable: "And how did you get here—and why?"

It was rainy in the Italian lake district yesterday morning; Stresa and its Borromean Isles on Lake Maggiore did not look at all happy; Milan seemed like Manchester. But rising in the aeroplane to a height of 12,000 feet over the Apennines one found the sun shining down on the cities of Florence and Siena; farther over to our left lay Lake Trasimeno, with which Livy has acquainted every classical student in his description of the battle. It is a part of Italy which one does not see on the ordinary train route to Rome, skirting down the coast by Pisa and Leghorn through innumerable tunnels.

Rome was not built in a day, so we were continually informed in our youth; it certainly cannot be seen in a day nor described in a day.

Baedeker, at whom we often so wrongly sniff, is not only a friend of the lonely globe-trotting spinster as portrayed on the stage by Ruth Draper. Prosaic as he may be, he is a boon for travellers, and I am content not to try to poach on his preserves. Charles Dickens told us that there is probably not a famous picture or statue in all Italy but could be easily buried under a mountain of printed paper devoted to dissertations on it; for which reason there is no need to expatiate at any length on Painting and Sculptures.

My first twenty-four hours here have not been idle. I have seen the Borghese Gardens (by sunlight, not yet by moonlight on this trip), the British Embassy, all the tennis stars playing at the wonderful Forum Mussolini, have dined at the local *Ciro's-cum-Savoy-cum-Berkeley* and gone on to the equivalent of the Florida; have seen the Princess Jane di San Faustino and King Alfonso, and have been taken to a Roman cocktail party.

I was, unfortunately, a day too late for the great Easter celebration in St. Peter's, which is one of the most impressive sights in the world. There are visitors here from all over Europe who have come especially for this ceremony. One of them told me of his good fortune in seeing it. Having obtained two passes from his hotel, his friend took one and was escorted to a box, but his own ticket being of a different colour only seemed to permit him to stand at the back of the crowd and see nothing.

Clad in morning clothes and top-hat (these or evening dress are obligatory if you are going into a box), he was wandering sorrowfully about when his taxi-driver saw him. Appalled at the thought that he would not see the ceremony, the driver approached a stately official wearing a magnificent uniform, who at once escorted my friend to

a box within five yards of the spot from which the Pope blessed the crowd. And the only remuneration necessary was ten lire for the magnificently dressed official.

The British Embassy has a lovely garden attached to its house in the Via Palestro. The house is not as imposing as many of the Roman *palazzi* (the French Embassy at the Farnese Palace is the most lovely one), but there is no prettier sight than the garden was this morning with the Judas-trees in full bloom.

The Taverna del Quirinale seems to be the fashionable restaurant at the moment in which to dine; everybody goes there, yet it is so respectable that *débutantes*, as at the Berkeley in London, go without a chaperone.

Then there is a move to the Hollywood (the local Florida), where I learned of a custom which is the antithesis of ours. Contessa Bezzi-Scali, a very attractive member of Roman society and the sister-in-law of Marchesa Marconi, was sitting in our party when a young Italian came up and without a word whisked her off in a dance. After two or three twirls round the room, he deposited her back again, bowed to us all, and departed. Commenting that I thought this strange, I was informed that it was a complimentary gesture on his part to show that he approved of the *Contessa's* new friends (there was another Englishman in the party, too), otherwise he would not have asked her to dance. We felt most flattered.

Most of the entertaining, otherwise, is done in private houses, for entry to which it is absolutely essential to have the "all right" signal hoisted by the Princess Jane di San Faustino. She rules the "ruins of ancient Rome," as she calls some of her friends, just as sternly as she presides over her court at the Lido beach.

The Palazzo-Ambasciatore (the Ambassadors), the Grand and the Excelsior are the big hotels where one can find anybody staying here. At the Grand I have the Cuban Minister on one side, the ex-King of Spain on the other, and the Grand Duke Dmitry in a huge suite above me. The Palazzo-Ambasciatore hotel in the Via Vittorio Veneto is the most modern hotel, and is under the management of M. Galante, who was in charge of the Italian State Tourist department in Piccadilly before returning to Rome. Here is the dance-bar, Hollywood, and most fashionable.

Roman society is just one mass of *marchesas*, *principessas*, and *contessas*. This is due to the fact that every son of one of these calls himself a *marchese*, a *principe*, or a *conte*, and so you get hordes of them of the same name. Take the Ruspoli family, for example. One can get in a rare muddle if one attempts to talk about the numerous Princesses Ruspoli. The only thing to do is to add the Christian name, too.

A stranger coming to Rome for a few days will inevitably find himself in a certain set, and then he will not meet anybody else of the other sets unless he is going to live here. At the instant of my arrival Princess Jane di San Faustino detailed to me my plans. I was immediately taken to a cocktail party at the house of Marchesa Bianca di Bagno (the literal translation might be the Marchioness of Bath), where were the Duke of Brindisi, Princess Doria Ruspoli (she is English, formerly Miss Labouchère), Marchesa di Lomonaco (American), and the Contessa Orietta Borromeo. She is the daughter of the Princess Doria and is a cousin of Major Charles Vaughan, who is one of the chamberlains to the Pope. I had seen her seventeen years before, when I was soldiering

near Milan; her beauty has not altered one whit.

English was spoken just as much as Italian. As regards character, the cocktail party was no different from any in England. One saw many of those who had attended it in the Taverna di Quirinale afterwards, just as in London they "make up a party and dine somewhere."

The next day at luncheon at Princess Jane's was the Duchess of Sermoneta, as well as many who had been at the cocktail party. And the conversation was mostly of a charity tableau to take place next month, and of Pirandello's appearance in the Palazzo Ruspoli late that afternoon for another charity.

This I found to be on the same lines as our own gala matinées; not as many people turned out as were expected. I walked down lines of Blackshirts through many rooms full of treasures, into one which was replete with busts of the Cæsars, from behind one of which I expected at any moment to see Miss Olga Lynn appear to direct the ceremonies. Alas that Pirandello's nuances delivered in Italian were too much for me, and I slipped away before the end.

That night I was taken to a party at the Marchesa di Lomonaco's *palazzo*: this seemed to be on much more formal lines than those in London. Nearly everybody plays bridge or backgammon, looking very serious, or else you sit quietly and decorously in a frescoed corner, pretending not to be discussing the latest Roman scandal. Mrs. Reginald Fellowes's daughter, the Marchesa Casteja; was there, also the Marchesa Francesca Patrizi, a very charming American whose husband is interested in Persian oil fields with Lord Glenconner.

The young people in Rome all work very hard, but are

lucky that, in the hot weather (May to September), they can slip off to Ostia and other seaside resorts, only half an hour out of Rome on the *auto-strada*. In September everybody who can leave the city, as they do if possible during the day-time of the summer months, returning to dine in the cool of the evening in one or other of the very numerous open-air restaurants.

I made my usual pilgrimage to Alfredo's to eat *fettuccine*. In 1919 I used to go there with Captain Jack Eyre: he was attached to the British Embassy, while I had the delightful job of entertaining distinguished British visitors when they passed through Rome.

If you glance at a certain date in the visitors' book in Alfredo's, you may see a host of what the social columns call "good names" encircled by a large bracket leading to the sentence, "All staying with Mrs. Corrigan at the Villa Madama." She had rented this from "dear Dorothy," as all her friends call the Contessa di Frasso, the American wife of the owner of one of the loveliest villas in the world. Princess Doria and Princess Colonna, of the Black or Papal nobility, are considered to be probably the leading ladies in Rome. The old feud between the black and white nobility exists hardly at all since the last twenty years.

Of the *débutantes* in Rome, poor little souls, I was told "that they have no standing at all"—a very different position from that of our white-dressed little darlings who leave the ballrooms of Grosvenor and Belgrave squares to slip off to the Florida and the Four Hundred.

Opera in Rome may be divided, like Ancient Gaul, into three parts: the *premieres*, the *abbonamenti*, and the *popolare*. Roman society flocks to the *premieres*, does not care whether it is seen at the *abbonamenti* (ordinary

subscription nights), and would probably rather not be seen at the *popolare*: this does not affect the operatic performances, which are excellent, and start at the reasonable hour of nine o'clock.

The Opera House itself was refashioned in 1928 and now it is very brilliant in design and modernity, very comfortable if perhaps a little too hot, and possesses excellent acoustics. But it does not yet possess the character of La Scala, Milan, with its century and a half of tradition, its musical museum, and its numerous foyers lined with the statues and busts of great Italian composers—Verdi, Rossini, Boito, Puccini. La Scala remains the *grande dame* of Italian opera, with the Teatro Reale of Rome as her princely young nephew. The San Carlo Opera House of Naples ranks after these two in Italy, but for performance I think Rome, where Tullio Serafin is the *maestro* in charge, leads the field with La Scala.

I heard the *Barber of Seville* in which Borgioli, the tenor (there is Borgioli the baritone, too), was singing: He does not indulge in vocal acrobatics, and is always pleasing without possessing the magnetism of a Gigli.

La Traviata showed us that Verdi in his home country goes with a swing unlike anywhere else; the feebleness of the libretto is swamped by the wealth of lovely tunes. Basiola took the baritone part of the elder Germont, whose instructions to his son to abandon the "Lady of the Camellias" would have very little effect upon the youth of to-day.

It was a *popolare* evening for the Government insists on a reduction of prices at least once a fortnight, and the last night of the season; the Opera House closes down next week, when all the stars move off to Florence for the May Musical Festival.

FLORENCE

April

BELLS CHIME OUT all day from the campaniles of this lovely city; one side of the River Arno must be talking to the other. The towers seemingly have a great deal to say to one another, but I doubt that their conversation has altered much since the days of Giovanni di Medici, who died in 1429.

Florence is a perfect salon in the baronial mansion of Italy; in it are all the smallest yet the rarest treasures of the house. The room must be kept bright and light to show off their beauty; that is why, when it rains, Florence looks like a lovely woman in evening dress sheltering beneath a leaking umbrella.

Rome has its magnificence, so much improved by Mussolini's great work; Venice has its Grand Canal; Naples has towering Vesuvius, with Pompeii beneath it; Florence has its perfect miniature beauty, so clear-cut and well defined.

I am not going to define this beauty for you. The task of dealing with such world-renowned places as the Uffizi Gallery, the National Museum, the Archæological Museum, and the Palazzi Vecchio, Medici and Pitti is better in the hands of Ruskin, whose "Mornings in Florence" is a work of sheer delight, and of E. V. Lucas, under whose tuition you can become the perfect "Wanderer in Florence."

The Florentine has a quick brain; his sense of humour is acute, unlike that of the Roman, and he is rapier-like

with his remarks. Benvenuto Cellini said of Florence: "It is a cruel city to live in—but still more cruel not to live in." Spring (the Italian *Primavera*) is the most beautiful season for this city, when it is smothered in white azaleas, "the white flower of a blameless life." Beneath them one cannot scent the Florentine intrigues.

The musical festival is just beginning; the weather is not yet suitable for the open-air performances in the Boboli Gardens, which take place at the end of May. Then it should be perfect: July and August are much too hot. I missed Pirandello's lecture in the Palazzo Vecchio. I wonder if it was the one which he gave in the Palazzo Ruspoli in Rome?

Mrs. George Keppel may be termed the Queen of Florence. The tea parties in her lovely villa are redolent of Edwardian days and dignity. Another beautiful villa is that of Mr. Acton, an American; Major and Mrs. Maclean entertain a good deal, so does the Contessa Villaporsa. As in Rome, bridge and backgammon are popular, and the Florentine, like the Roman, has now become the most ardent golfer, playing on a course unsurpassable for beauty.

There is a large artistic American colony, one of whose members, Mrs. Currier, the wife of the American artist, is probably the prettiest woman I have seen during this trip to Italy; she is the sister of Mrs. Leo d'Erlanger. The Curriers had a villa on the slopes of Fiesole, five miles to the north-east of the town, but now live in the States. There is nothing more attractive than these hillside villas, with the cypress trees standing guardian over them.

Something modern in Florence which is very good are the chocolate cakes which one gets at Doney's.

This resort is a bar and cake shop on one side of the road and a restaurant on the other. The chocolate "sport" cake almost rivals the Sacher cakes of Vienna; there is also a cake called "chimney-sweeper," which is the best of all. It is made from the remnants of all the cakes of the day before, with a chocolate coating.

Before leaving Rome I went to say good-bye to Princess Jane di San Faustino. Her exertions in the cause of charity and numerous social enterprises (I trust these did not include entertaining me) had caused her to have a rest for a day or two.

Leaning back in her huge white bed; with a large white silk cushion covering her feet, this wonderful white-haired old lady discoursed words of much wisdom (the product of a life spent in Rome, with an American upbringing) and then she added rather crossly: "Why have you not been to see the *Littoria*? Young man, it is Mussolini's greatest work; the reclaiming of those Pontine marshes [these are about thirty miles out of Rome] is one of the most thrilling things in the history of Italy."

I murmured something quite inappropriate, to which she replied: "I suppose those girls only took you to the tennis, the golf, the Excelsior, and the Ambassadors." But they had done their best in driving me all over the city, showing me Mussolini's great improvements in the roads around the Colosseum and the Forum.

I did not see the Borghese Gardens by moonlight; sunset had to suffice. The Roman lady looks upon such a thing as a banality equivalent to Hampstead Heath on a Bank Holiday. And I did so long to take two of the most brilliant specimens of "Les Girls" to the Ambassadors and watch the astonishment on the faces of the Roman aristocracy.



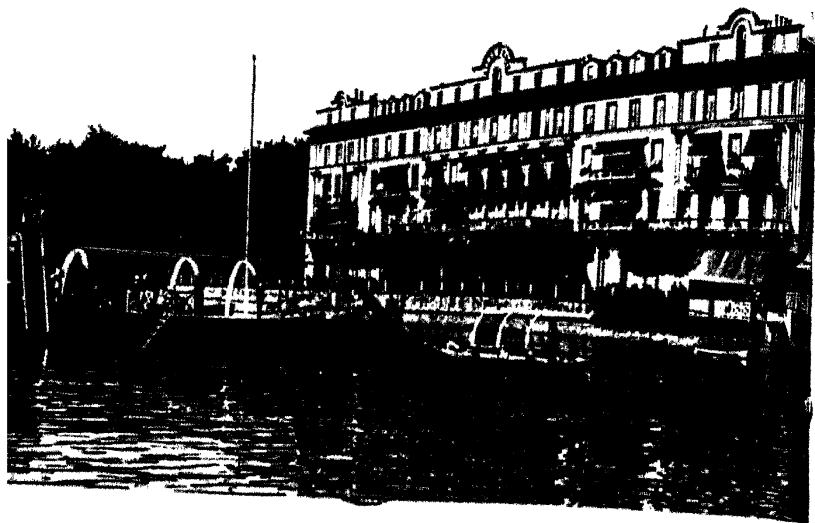
THE VILLA BALBIANELLO, OWNED BY GENERAL BUTLER-AMES, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.



KAY FRANCIS



THE LATE ANTONIO SCOTT (R.).



VILLA D'ESTE.



THE FRANKS AND (WITH BERET)
GEORGE TOYE.



M. WILLY DOMBRÉ LOOKING
AT HIS LIGHTER.

PARIS

April

MY ITALIAN GRAMMAR is ready to go back to the book-bag. The Rome express for once had rumbled into Paris one and a half hours late, having grumbled considerably somewhere about the hilly regions of Aix-les-Bains at an extra coach put on for the heavy holiday traffic. Pisa's Leaning Tower looked like a tipsy piece of icing on a sugar cake; I had time for a last cup of "express" coffee on the platform. Behind was Leghorn, famous for its chickens and white rabbits (there is also a harbour), ahead were those eighty-four tunnels between Spezia and Genoa; luckily the railway has been electrified, obviating all fumigation.

Apennines change to Alps, we pass Arquata, full of war-time memories, and then comes Turin with its Fiat lights twinkling us into the town. I love walking up and down platforms of the big Continental stations, secure in the thought that a pleasant meal and bed on the train are waiting to comfort the long night hours. Peering out of the window as the train drew into Turin, I heard a rather familiar noise, like the baying of a friendly hound: it emerged from a head thrown well back, and surmounted by a beret. Who else could it be but Mr. Francis Toye, on the way home from his villa at Porto Fino?

"My dear boy, how nice to see you!" the melodious baying continues. "We must dine together. No, we can't dine together—I've got three friends. But I'll tell you what, I will give you a glass (that is if there's any left

after dinner) of a bottle of wine from *my own* vineyard. Here it is."

I have already noticed the top sticking out of his mackintosh pocket.

"What did you think of Serafin in Rome?"

Here I am guarded in reply, for Mr. Francis Toye is possibly one of the greatest living authorities on Italian opera (he has written books on Verdi, Rossini, Bellini, and we are hoping for one on Puccini) and an ill-planned word will change that friendly bay to a hostile bark.

"Tell me just what you think of this," he calls across the dining-car, as with much ceremony the remnants of the bottle are carried to my table. A sip of the bottled Italian sunshine, and I can picture Francis and his brother Geoffrey (a most talented composer with a great sense of humour who is giving us our Gilbert and Sullivan operas on the films) hopping about bare-footed as they tread down the luscious grapes:

"Like to a moving vintage down they came
Crown'd with green leaves . . ."

Both brothers are great connoisseurs of wine, while Francis spends much of his time as managing director of Boulestin's restaurant. Hear them in a discussion over a bottle of claret: "Geoffrey, doesn't this bouquet recall to you that of the 1900 Giscours we found quite by accident in that little *auberge* at Fines Herbes?" asks Francis.

"Where's Fines Herbes?" you gently query.

"Oh, a small place near that tiny seaport on the Brittany coast where Geoffrey, Richard Collett (you know him, a director of the Savoy Hotel group) and I have been every summer for the last twenty-five years. We refuse to tell anybody else where it is."

"Oh, and, Francis," says Geoffrey, "do you remember that odd daughter of the *patron* who sidled through the door like a crab, and you said she reminded you of a witch in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*?"

Francis quickly counters: "No, no, I said the hunch-back Malatesta in *Francesca da Rimini*. Don't you think. . . ."

After Modane it is the refrain of the wheels which is lulling me to sleep, bringing an oblivion which always gets a jolt at Dijon, the best alarm-clock I know.

At the Gare de Lyon the beret looked out of the window with a "See you at the Queen's Hall, Tuesday night, for the Berlin Philharmonic's concert." And louder as I nod assent, wave a greeting and recede into the distance: "And they're playing that interminable Mahler symphony—I wish Furtwängler'd choose his programme with a more . . ."

But the Rome express is off on its journey round the *ceinture* of Paris, and the words of Mr. Francis Toye, as loyal a friend as man could want, are lost in the music of the turning wheels. Yet the Toye canvas is still before me, and I can see on it a Promenade concert at the Queen's Hall. Francis, Geoffrey, with Richard Collett and, I think, Dr. Malcolm Sargent (he trod a pretty grape in the 1934 Toye vintage) had come in after the interval to hear the Sibelius symphonic poem *Tapiola*, and stood with the crowd in the Promenade. Following this item came a "Group of songs, accompanied by the composer at the piano."

The quartet was swept up towards the platform among the enthusiastic crowd of the composer's admirers, but as the first song finished and volumes of applause broke forth, above it surged the word "Awful." For Francis

does not enjoy sentimental ballads (and I agree with him), and gave tongue accordingly. His brother and friends, wedged in the masses up against the piano, disowned him altogether; there were furious looks from the "fans," and he narrowly escaped joining the gold-fish in the fountain adorning the centre of the Promenade.

[A few days after the printing of the first edition of this book, I saw the Baroness d'Erlanger. "Did you know Princess Jane di San Faustino died last week?" she asked. There followed one of those black moments when one feels the passing of somebody who seemed an impregnable fortress against time.]

I think that you can picture too with me the passing of this Grande Dame, with alternating moments of anger and pathos—bearing her murmur: "Go away, go away, I don't want you all fussing round. Leave me alone." So let your last impression of her be as mine—of the snow white figure in the large white bed, almost shaking that admonitory forefinger as she takes her princessly farewell of this world.]

IN SEARCH OF SUN

Third Year

LE TOUQUET AND DEAUVILLE

LE TOUQUET. PAS-DE-CALAIS

Easter

"SA MER: SON GOLF: SON CASINO." These, so the posters tell us, are the three principal attractions of Le Touquet-Paris-Plage. Easter is always too early for sea sports; the *piscines* of Northern France do not open till Whitsun, so there remain the golf and the casino with which to deal. However, the sea has had its say, especially to those who have just crossed over. And, judging by the wan and pallid expressions of some of the visitors, they had duly replied to its questioning.

The crossings both by air and by sea were not at all pleasant, for a wind had been howling over the sand dunes for the past fortnight, accompanied by rain. I forgot that you must never call it "rain" at fashionable *plages*; it is a disturbance attributable to local conditions, and has its own local name such as *brume* or *brouillard*.

Any seaside resort looks unhappy in bad weather, but as the majority of visitors come over here at holiday times with the avowed intention of looking for eights and nines or reds and blacks, they have less cause to grumble than those who stay at home.

Luckily, rough crossings have now lost their terrors for me. Formerly being sick at the sight of a gang-plank or a propeller, I now owe a great debt of gratitude to the doctor brother of the McAlpine family (brothers Sir Malcolm and Sir Alfred are popular figures in the racing as well as in the hotel—they own the Dorchester—and contracting worlds) who invented the prescription for

"White Wings." The family for some time kept this mixture (it is now sold in tablets) for private distribution; fortunately, in the cause of humanity they have allowed it to come on the market. Naturally there are some crossings and some people whom nothing can mollify, but lately only on the rarest occasions have I suffered those tortures known only to sufferers from travel-sickness. Therefore I feel that it is a genuine "Boy Scout's good deed" in telling of it.

A point upon which, fortunately, most air lines are firm is in the prohibition of smoking: even if a compartment is set aside for it the whiff of a strong cigar will soon percolate through. It is no doubt quite safe to smoke; on the other hand, air travel is not motionless, and for many passengers who are affected by the movement this feeling is intensified by the smell of tobacco smoke. It seems that smokers, considering all points, might sacrifice at the most three hours out of their tobacco life. They can make up for it when the journey is over, and there are always halts on long trips.

A hint for sensitive travellers is to move as little as possible in your seat once you have taken your "dope": do not be inveigled by the steward into filling up forms just when you are settled in a state of calm composure.

The wind dropped yesterday, making conditions perfect for the golfers. Those who specialise in taking out a neat square of turf with their iron shots found the course just in the right state. With my beautifully matched new set of Lockwood Brown steel clubs I am prepared for my annual contest with Mr. Edward Robson, in which he receives a stroke a hole and drives from the forward tees. As my official handicap is nineteen,

it shows that Mr. Robson is no bull of himself on the golf course.

It is too soon for the course officials and caddies to wear their straw hats; as much noise as ever comes from the caddie-house, resembling midday break at an elementary school, or a section of the Zoological Gardens. The local breed of caddies seems rather to be deteriorating, especially in the male strain, who seem to have grown rather surly; the female line is maintaining its pleasant traditions, especially in its lack of cleverness in marking a golf-ball, and in prematurely adding to the population of Etaples.

One could have seen Messrs. Charles and Robert Sweeny swinging their clubs, the wife of the former dutifully watching her husband's play, which she thinks has somewhat gone off. But golfing experts set themselves such a very high standard.

Having played your afternoon round of golf, your thoughts are naturally verging towards the Casino. To get there you must catch the motor-omnibus thoughtfully provided by the directorate of the Syndicat d'Initiative (another name for Casino). It should run every hour, but there are times when the chauffeur buries his head in the bonnet in a manner reminiscent of Harry Tate.

Arriving at the Casino, and having duly admired the plaque which commemorates the presence there during the war of Constance Duchess of Westminster and her hospital, you wander into the rooms, temporarily abandoning the excellent ozone of the links. You will at once notice crowds round the roulette tables, which are very popular. If you see that there is great excitement at one of them it will be due to the fact that

Mr. Edward Robson is bringing off some coups. He won 150,000 francs at one table very quickly, which made M. Aboudaram, the head of the Casino, go scuttling off to the *caisse* to arrange for reinforcements.

The Shires are always well represented here at Easter. Good-looking, tweeded girls, having turned those trusty steeds Punch and Cardinal out to grass for the summer, are escorted by young men of the Cheltenham type (also tweeded, they bolt about between the fences at the National Hunt Meeting), and of basset-hound mentality—sturdy, worrying, faithful and patient. For these pretty girls of sporting ways who “lead their own lives” also lead the young men a pretty dance until they finally allow themselves to be escorted to the altar.

It is no novelty to say that Lord Portarlington was there, nor that he was wearing his “I Zingari” tie with the advent of April, for it is equally at home round his neck in November. His appearances on the cricket field for this famous club have not been as frequent as those of Captain David Ritchie and Mr. K. A. Sellar, both of whom were also wearing the colours and are much younger members. This tie and a large and beautiful Rolls-Royce (body designed for Windovers expressly by his Lordship) are his invariable accompaniments.

Le Touquet is never complete without Mr. Clive Burn, whose air *si distingué* is much respected. He is a lawyer; on the outside of his deed boxes you may read “The Duchy of Cornwall” and “The Golf Hotel, Le Touquet,” which he manages for Major Jack Courtauld, who has worked wonders with his new designs and decorations for the hotel. Mr. Burn also organises the Invitation Golf Handicap Sweepstakes here in the autumn, in which there is a high pool to be won: I do not think he

has ever won it himself, though he has been the winner of the Bath Club Handicap, which takes some doing.

The Golf Hotel caters especially for that eminently county clientèle so much respected by our Gallic friends. For they like to see our *haut monde* enjoy itself, and not shut up as are their own Faubourg-Saint-Germain-ites, content with themselves and the rigorous etiquette of *La Famille*. Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Akroyd, with fair-haired, strong-jawed, often-engaged-yet-still-unmarried cousin Peter; Mrs. Du Boulay, with her *souriante* daughter Susie; the George Philipsons; the Frank Douglasses; Admiral Sir Basil Brooke; Mr. Philip Rhodes escaping for a mere bank holiday from the strains of the Stock Exchange—all are regular visitors.

In contrast to Cannes or Monte Carlo, play before dinner will not be very high at the big table; it takes a gala meal at the Restaurant de la Forêt, assisted by a cabaret, to make patrons really anxious to gamble. Mr. Keith Williams is probably the most forward player, as he will win or lose £15,000 quite cheerfully at a sitting.

Lord Willoughby de Broke does not play such a forcing game, but is usually very successful. Mr. Walter Dunkels, of the diamond syndicate, is another regular player at the big table, though not as highly as in former days. He prefers to walk restlessly round the tables having a good big *banco* at any large sum he sees lying idle, or to "plaster" number 26 to the maximum at roulette. With his iron-grey hair and monocle he is a distinguished, cheerful figure whether winning or losing. His wife is an excellent hostess, and the family unity which they displayed in an unfortunate lawsuit last year increased both the numbers and the respect of their friends. Mr. Philip Hill, who hits a long pretty golf-ball,

is content to make a modest *mille* at a small table—modest at least for Mr. Hill, with his great wealth.

"Dear little Buck! He's so sweet!", say all the girls about Captain H. J. Buckmaster, founder of Buck's Club, which, in addition to its own golf tournament here, gives a challenge cup to the Le Touquet Golf Club for an Easter competition. "Buck" has an understanding, sympathetic, half-amused look when he listens to sad stories from beauty in distress; he must keep a lot of secrets locked up in his heart.

Lady Dufferin confines her attentions to roulette, at which Lord Michelham will occasionally venture a hundred or two francs. The fact that he will only indulge in a modest *demi-Evian* at the bar does not mean that he expects his guests to do the same. I noted one taking advantage of the caviare and champagne.

Lord Rochdale, Lord Fitzwilliam, and Sir Richard Cruise lent distinction to the general gathering, which was voted by a Frenchman to be "not so *très Mayfair* as usual." Colonel George Parkinson, the head of the big contracting firm, was enjoying himself without gambling. His firm, of which the three brothers who founded it started from "scratch," is now employed in the largest contract ever let by the British Government—the Chorley Ordnance Factory, near Preston in Lancashire. They have created a world's record for speedy completion.

Le Touquet changes very little. After all, its habitués would be disappointed—

1. If the electric lights did not temporarily fail (only for a minute or two, of course). This enables the municipal engineer to show his control over the lighting system.

2. If one did not see the usual enthusiastic Frenchman in white plus-fours and the inevitable beret playing round on the ladies' course, and whose strokes produce about one hit to three misses.
3. If "Casino Kate" did not annually emerge from her winter retirement and bring off her startling coups at about four in the morning, just when the tables are thinning out.
4. If one of the Casino's sofas was not occupied by a sad and tearful woman, denoting, perhaps, that she had lost the year's housekeeping money.
5. If Georges, the barman, ceased to smile.
6. If, having left the Casino at dawn, one were not sent to sleep by the nightingale; the enjoyment of her song depends entirely upon whether one has won or lost.
7. If one did not hear that peculiar chink of the bells which always adorn French pet dogs as they trot up the hotel corridors.

LE TOUQUET. PAS-DE-CALAIS

Whitsuntide

THE ABOVE ADDRESS is not strictly correct: at this moment I am *en voiture* for departure from Pas-de-Calais along the marshes of Somme and down into Seine-Inférieure for my annual week's retreat into Normandy, with two most instructive companions in Marcel Proust and Guy de Maupassant. Oddly enough, this visit always seems to coincide with the arrival of the May-fly on the numerous Norman rivers which pierce the apple-blossomed meadows on their way to the sea.

Few changes occur since my despatch from this front at the Easter offensive, though the troops attacking the Casino have been redoubled, some of whom will find defeat here: for them this district can be called *Pas d'Argent*. The nautical division has not yet been in action, due to the low temperature existing along the sea-front, though their invasion of the *piscine* is probably now only a matter of hours.

The adjacent native territory of Paris-Plage remains moderately quiet, and is scarcely expected to show unwonted liveliness until onwards from the 14th of July. Activity is more confined to the area occupied by the overseas contingent now billeted among the pine-trees in the Hermitage, Picardy and Westminster Hotels.

The midnight raid on the Casino's Big Table is always spectacular. Battling nobly in the foreground you can see scions of the houses of Ostrer, Laski, Raphael, Dodero and Marks, as they fight a veritable Blenheim in contrast to the Duke of Marlborough's modest Malplaquet.

I even love only to see money: just to be in the gambling rooms among millionaires makes me less forlorn. We always fondly suppose that were we rich ourselves we should behave entirely differently from the rich; it is like supposing that we could drink all day and keep completely sober.

It is warmer here than in London: when I got off the Imperial Airways machine the cold wind had gone and has only returned in a few unfriendly gusts. And it was a change on arrival only to motor a town-taxi distance instead of those jolting twelve kilometres from Berck. The new aerodrome is altogether a great success. The journey was calm and quiet, except that Jack Doyle would vary his voice in tone between that of an opera singer and a crooner: he continued his entertainment in the night club Casanova the same evening.

Lord and Lady Furness landed yesterday with his Lockheed machine. They leave to-day, probably to be in readiness to shoot Lord Michelham's rooks at Rolleston next week. It was between sips of a large Vichy with Mr. John Hopwood in the golf-club bar that I learned how Lord Michelham had kicked off at a recent football match here between Le Touquet and the French Banks. His Lordship's cosmopolitan interests gave him the right to kick for the Banks, but it seemed that he propelled the ball in the wrong direction.

Still the weather has that dull, sulky look, as though it would like to be as cold as February, but scarcely dares to be; in any case, these pine forests protect one very well, and I have seen some lovely dawns. As one emerges from the Casino, the chorus of our feathered friends is such a charming matutinal greeting, even though we may feel rather feathered ourselves. There

is a nightingale who sings each dawn, and not by arrangement with the B.B.C., outside my window at the Westminster Hotel; her voice is like water bubbling from a silver jar, and she tells me all the mistakes I have just made at the tables, but unfortunately gives no advice for the coming evening.

The extraordinary thing about this air is that after four or five hours' sleep one wakes as fresh as a daisy; the reaction comes on the return to England.

Every night is a gala night at one or other of the hotels or restaurants; this certainly may add to the gaiety of the place concerned, but does not improve its *cuisine*. The Hermitage produces its usual effects from golden rain and fireworks outside the windows; within there was not even a toy balloon.

There have been some heavy wins in the Casino, but never think that anybody is winning at the big table just because he has piles of *ten-mille plaques* in front of him. What you want to discover is how many times he has visited the *caisse* for reinforcements.

You can watch M. Aboudaram, the head of the Casino, giving the "All right" or the "Beware" signal to his staff as they question him about applicants for cashing cheques. His pretty wife has now taken to gambling in five-franc pieces at the roulette tables: previously she used to go over to Berck if she wanted to play.

Debussy could have composed a new "Children's Corner Suite" had he been able to glance at the end of one roulette table where sat a bevy of lovely juveniles (as Casino ages go, for you must be twenty-one at entry) —Lady Jean Dundas, Miss Susan Hambro, Mrs. Kenneth Homan, Miss Pamela Moorhouse, Lady Jean Ramsay, and Miss Anne Tritton, all of whom will, I

hope, notice the strict alphabetical order. And Miss Tritton hotly denies any possibility of her engagement to Mr. Nigel Mordaunt. (*Note*.—She is now Mrs. Nigel Mordaunt.)

There seems no doubt that the Casino is a cure for claustrophobia. One young husband, whose wife's abhorrence of cinemas, theatres, and crowds of any kind had worried him really much more than her for some time, has discovered that seven hours of the Casino and Casanova night-club's crowds for four successive nights have quite cured her. She will now be able to achieve her life's ambition in chalking up attendance at the Four Hundred five nights in a week.

Let me give a hint to the Casanova. As a change from the ordinary night-club band I should like to suggest a real Cuban band; they have a weird assortment of instruments which might please the jaded palate of those who enjoy life so late at nights. The backbone of the orchestra is a *quijada*, which is part of a horse's skull; the teeth are loosened in their sockets, and the rhythm is produced by shaking the loose teeth together. There is also the *gangarria*: this instrument I consider rather a swindle, for it is nothing more than ordinary cow-bells. Then we could have the *bongoes*, not the rarest of African antelopes but just two small tom-toms tuned to different notes; they have to be heated over a spirit-lamp to tighten the heads before being played.

I could suggest a few more instruments. Do not choose the *furuparis* of the Rio Negro Indians, for women are not allowed to look at them, and young men have to be subjected to fasting and scourging before they can see them. Le Touquet is hardly the place for that.

There is more scope for the long Mexican *clarin*, into which the performer does not blow but through which he inhales the air (he will have few hopes of success who tries to play it at a bottle-party). This, with the assistance of my favourite Aztec *Yotl* bells and a tympanic accompaniment from drums covered with the skins of great serpents, could contrive to make a novel musical evening.

The French visitors all bolt back to Paris at night after the Whitsun holiday: it is exactly the same at Deauville, for the Frenchman never sleeps out of Paris the night before he is going to work. He starts business earlier in the morning than the majority of Englishmen, and amply compensates himself by two or three hours of *déjeuner* with family or girl-friend in the middle of the day.

Towards the end of June they will be saying to each other, "*Vous allez au Touquet pour le Buck's—hein?*" For to the French the first week-end of July, when Buck's Club holds its golf handicap, is the most chic week-end—"si Mayfair," as they would say.

Although, as I said before, caddies do not seem to be bred in the Etaples area in such profusion as in former years, yet the secretary, Mr. H. O. Hobson, manages to collect a good army. Whitsun week-ends are not easy to provide for.

And the caddies are becoming sophisticated. At the ninth hole is a rest-hut bar, where golfers not only refresh themselves but their caddies too. One young lad was asked what he would like, and instead of choosing the usual chocolate or lemonade he just said "*Une fine.*" I think he got a beer instead.

I repeat that little changes here. The electric light still adheres to its nightly two minutes' silence to show

how clever the local electricians are to be able to put it right so quickly.

Gamblers have been seen in evening clothes at mid-day, but not, as of old, slinking in by the back doors of the hotels: one or two actually sat quite cheerfully in the bar drinking their morning *apéritif*.

M. Alberto Dodero walks round the tables in his best pre-slump form and has now four roulette tables to keep him interested, should he have to wait some time for his bank at the big table.

Georges, the barman in the Casino, is serving his usual hundreds of suppers and breakfasts: he has a very efficient staff, in addition to being reasonable in his prices, which is not always the nature of Casino bars.

It is a disappointment that the weather has not yet permitted the grand opening of the *piscine*, that impolitely-sounding name for French swimming pools. I remember once how I should have enjoyed a post-prandial siesta here on its banks much more had not a Frenchman, complete with wife and two children, elected to encourage the latter to aquatic sports with Gallic volubility:—"Cload, Cload ['Claude' sounds like that in French], *monte sur le grenouille*." This animal was a large, green-painted, blown-up frog.

But Claude would not climb on this particular frog, and yowled accordingly, whereupon the exhortations of the family correspondingly increased in tone-control. So papa lifted the little monster on to the frog, which promptly obliged me by tipping up. This caused the lad to turn his feet up in the air in emulation of a deceased coot, and reduced him to silence, broken only while emptying his lungs of the waters of the *piscine*.

One may remark that not only do the French visitors

hustle away after the holiday. Some English folk are pretty nippy to cross the Channel, to race the cheques back to the bank where they are sure to appear at opening time on the Tuesday morning. The Casino authorities effect some smart cheque clearances over Easter and Whitsun, and the sight of the drawn sad face before the arrival of a heavily-franced document may often induce the bank manager to allow it to weather the storm.

DEAUVILLE

August

DEAUVILLE has an exotic yet informal and friendly air. The place gives the impression of evident wealth, as do its visitors; social significance is at a discount, for the words "*de luxe*" count for much more.

Deauville has a more French atmosphere than Le Touquet, but it has, and welcomes, an aerial invasion from England each week-end. It used to be rather an inaccessible spot to reach; those night journeys with the long sea crossing and early rising at Le Havre, leave one a little bit shop-soiled for the day. From Mayfair to the Casino is now only a matter of two hours, one of which is in the air. Yesterday evening from the aeroplane there were flickers of evening sunlight over Etretat, nestling in the cliffs. There were glimmers, too, to the left over Yvetot, where Guy de Maupassant lived: this Norman countryside provided the scene of so many of his short stories.

"What English people are coming over here this evening?" I asked in the Normandie Hotel. "Oh, you probably know some of them," they said: "two bankers, Mr. Sidney Emanuel and Captain Jock Campbell, in a party." As the hotel was full they had to live up to the best traditions of English bankers and hire a villa for the night.

This week-end especially, with the French holiday of the *Fête de l'Assomption*, and with the lovely weather which has been prevalent, there literally has not been a

room at the Normandie, the Royal, or the Golf Hotel.

The flowery language of the French newspapers is most complimentary to English visitors—"Aeroplanes and magnificent yachts have brought into the harbours the fine flower of British aristocracy, which is taking advantage of the Bank Holiday."

And we are also encouraged to take part in *bavardages agréables*; in other words, "a nice, pleasant bit of gossip," and among those who, they tell us, are profiting by this is "Lord Earl of Carnarvon." I am only waiting for the day when I shall read about "Lord Duke Furness," who is a regular visitor here for the *Grande Semaine*—his Christian name is Marmaduke, and he is always known as "Duke." One agrees that such names must be muddling for Gallic scribes.

From the French social point of view Deauville is "*très Newmarket*." Many famous studs are in the district, and the big money which is given for the races attracts all the best horses and their owners. Princess Faucigny-Lucinge (the head of the family), M. James Hennessy, M. Artur Veil-Picard, M. François Dupré, Mr. A. K. Macomber, M. Pierre Wertheimer, and Mr. R. B. Strassburger—all these are here to see their horses run.

Lord Furness, Lord Carnarvon, Colonel Charles McNeill, Mr. Benjamin Guinness, Sir William Bass, and Mr. Jack Clayton take great interest in the yearling sales as well as in the racing, and over all presides the Aga Khan, justly so, for he is one of the most brilliant personalities of the day. A common error is to suppose that the Aga Khan inherited all his vast wealth; some of it he certainly did, but most of it was made by his own foresight and cleverness.

Take a walk to the *plage* at noon. Surely that is Captain

Jefferson Cohn being greeted on all sides: he is usually described as the "Millionaire racehorse-owner financier." He himself would speedily agree that in the first and second categories he must be considered in the "ex" class; he always remains a financier.

That fair, leonine mane is somewhat thinner on the top, and the hair itself is shorter than he used to wear it; a wave of his hand will no longer buy Deauville, but his charm and spirits remain unquenchable.

And there goes M. André, the high priest of the luxury world, who very rightly informs me that the best food in Deauville is to be found in the Casino Grill room. M. André is a character who would have pleased Rudyard Kipling, for whether in his biggest enterprises he is enjoying fortune or the reverse, he gently smiles "and treats those two impostors just the same."

There is sure to be a chance to see Mr. Berry Wall and his Chow taking a walk. He was New York's gayest "young dog" in his youth; he now leads one about to remind him of those days. On the front, too, one can see those meek little men with fine, well-fronted wives, looking twice their height and breadth; and always do these portly French matrons lead the smallest of Pomeranian dogs, which tinkle a little bell out of all proportion to the dignity of the *équipage*.

I went to look at the bathing; it was so windy and rough that the red flag was up; also a notice: "*Bains Fermés: Danger.*" But Mr. Michael Farmer and several others daily brave these dangers.

The best yacht in the harbour has been Lord Kemsley's *Princess*, maintaining the finest traditions of the Royal Yacht Squadron and Cowes. Lord Iliffe and Mr. Brendan Bracken were among the guests, all marked on the

"distinguished" list by French society here, which is very critical.

Near Trouville, in the harbour, was *Narcissus*, chartered by Miss Rachel Parsons, and on the next yacht, *Lady Sharakad*, was none other than the owner, Mr. M. S. ("Mossy") Myers, of stockbroking and Covent Garden fame, resting after a very rough crossing from St. Malo, in which harbour I last located him.

Most of his party had temporarily enjoyed enough of life on the ocean wave, and had retreated to the Normandie Hotel; Miss Sepha Treble and Miss Roma June were among the sensible defaulters, while Mr. Sidney Landau remained loyal by wearing his yachting cap to keep his chief in good company.

Mr. Myers, who some years ago won a dancing competition at the Embassy Club with Mrs. Albert de Courville, almost repeated his triumph at Trouville—when dancing the "Java" with the same partner. Unfortunately, there was no actual competition.

From the next yacht in the harbour came sounds as of a giant in pantomime or an announcer in Wembley Stadium at a Cup Final. It was Lord Michelham addressing the French public in English through his loud-speaker. Crowds of trippers stood on the quay in awe of these weird sounds, finally moving slowly and sadly away, full of admiration, but bereft of understanding.

Lady Phyllis Allen and Lady Diana Gibb were on board; the former must have been missing her annual visit to Pourville, where she was a very regular attendant. Mrs. de Winton Wills was also there, and Mr. John Hopwood, all old friends of Lord Michelham, who remains very staunch to his particular circle. His brother Mr. Jack Michelham has just joined him: after a clever

COUNT PAUL MUNSTER,
THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH
AND THE EARL OF
CARLISLE AT LE TOUQUET.



LORD GRIMTHORPE, MRS. IDINA MILLS AND CAPTAIN H. J. BUCKMASTER.



LORD MICHELHAM (WITH BATH-WRAI
AND SIR JOHN LATTI.
(ON DEAUVILLE'S PLAGE)



CAPTAIN JEFFERSON COHN.



THE HON. JACK MICHELHAM.

financial deal a few months ago, he has been residing in Belgium since, taking advantage of the currency.

His new prawning costume can be seen each morning at the Bar du Soleil, and he is clever enough with his net to be able to assist the luncheon menu daily on board. I tried some of his catch yesterday, but I fear his economy was rather wasted, as he had not cooked them very well. Sir John Latta, the big shipowner, reminded him how he had helped to make him a quarter of a million pounds with some financial advice; in return Mr. Michelham has promised him a lovely gold watch.

Perennial visitors following the Goodwood meeting are Sir Humphrey de Trafford, who is one of the real brains in the Jockey Club, with great force of character; Colonel Wilfred Egerton, most distinguished of our sartorial experts; Captain Alan Stanley, of oyster-like inscrutability; and Commander Philip de Crespigny, accompanied by his old shipmate, Sir Melville Ward. Whether as a midshipman on the deck of the Royal Yacht *Victoria and Albert*, or in the card-room of the St. James's Club, or strolling down Throgmorton Street, or lying in bed here asleep in the early morning, sun streaming in, electric light on, and his head shielded from the glare by the *Continental Daily Mail*, "the Skipper" has always turned a smiling face to fair winds or adverse. He is "among the money" again now, and all his old friends will benefit.

George, the Greek hall-porter at the Ritz in London, always spends three weeks of his holiday here in the Aga Khan's entourage. The Aga has often borrowed him from the Ritz to act as his courier, and I know of no better-informed man in the world of concierges (a most knowledgeable race) than George. And Prince Ali

Khan always lends an air of amused intelligence to these resorts: he is a very fine jockey and a shrewd judge of racing.

In the Casino you will see M. André again, quietly smiling as the players move to take their places at the big table at midnight; M. Zographos, head of the Greek Syndicate, gives his orders to his lieutenant who will hold the baccarat bank; Lord Carnarvon murmurs, "I feel like a sheep about to go to the *abattoir*." But the butcher would find in Lord Carnarvon a very tough sheep; he keeps himself very fit, and has no need of a shepherd at the big table. Mr. James Hennessy greets Lady Furness, who is quite the most lovely figure in the room, and the play begins.

All eyes watch the Hungarian M. Zaly, who wagers a hundred *milles* a coup. "He was down £6,000 before dinner," they whisper, "but he's got it all back now—and more." "Hush, hush!" exclaims Mrs. Wilfred Egerton, nervously pushing forward a little "chicken food" alongside a pile of the Hungarian's plaques. But as long as the conversation only drowns the croupier's "*Neuf a la banque*" the Greek member will not worry: an open window is a far more serious event. And he nods, smiling to M. Zaly whenever he wins a coup: the bigger the coup the bigger the smile.

Lord and Lady Stanley are always among the most popular of the English visitors, and the one who certainly cheers up the Casino is Colonel Cripps. Crowds of "young ladies" follow his career from roulette to *chemin de fer* and on to baccarat: most of them think that a winning coup necessitates his supplying them with champagne at the bar.

It is interesting to note some of those who hardly

gamble at all. Lord Michelham will perhaps toy with a hundred-franc note, or watch his friends playing a system; Mr. Woolley Hart inspects, and does not play, evidently husbanding his resources for one of his wife's parties; Mr. Austin O'Connor, the king of "ladies' hats" who owns the firm of Condor, prefers to sit and watch his party play; Sir Julien and Lady Cahn work out an interminable roulette system at a few francs a time. But the gallant Colonel Cripps steps out in no uncertain manner, and a run against the bank at the big baccarat table will give him a pocketful of the plaques that really matter.

I had noticed, as in previous years, that in Sir Julien Cahn's cricket fixture list (he has some sixty-four days in the season) a few days in August are left blank which enables him to visit Deauville. Otherwise he heads his "Merry men," and he recently scored a sparkling fifty against The Storks. He has invited me to bring a team against him next year: the challenge is accepted and a visit to Lord's and the Oval will probably be my prelude to the match at Stanford. His side is the hardest amateur team in the country to defeat.

And I will back Sir Julien to be the best amateur conjurer in the country, too: the performances, which he gives in the new theatre just built on to his house, are truly polished. It is exactly the same programme as that of the great Chung Ling Soo.

IN SEARCH OF SUN

Deauville Dialogues

DEAUVILLE, IN THE CASINO, AT THE RACES

DEAUVILLE

August

CALVADOS is not only the *eau-de-vie* of the apple; there is a department of France just south of the estuary of the Seine which both gives its name to this liqueur and nurses Deauville in the warmest corner of its heart. Close at her elbow stands her attendant servant Trouville-sur-Mer, always at hand to care for those whom the Grande Dame de Luxe of Normandy does not welcome to her presence.

In July and August, the two months in the year when La Marquise de Deauville holds her receptions, regular visitors expect to receive cards sent out by her trusty major-domo, M. André, "to invite you to view the Plage Fleurie at noon, the Hippodrome at 2.15, the polo at five o'clock, and afterwards at the Casino."

The moth-like meditations which have been hovering in my imagination during the past few days must now burst from their chrysalis: it is the hour before dinner, and I am following though, unfortunately, with less success, the example of Marcel Proust, who would sit at this time in his bedroom, spinning out his long, lovely, laborious woof of literature.

The shadows are lengthening over the golf-course below; my abode is perched high on a hill two miles from Deauville, with air coming up from the sea like champagne. One looks out towards the thought-suggesting sea, with the lights of Le Havre already sparkling like a cluster of stars.

Tuesday is a peaceful day here with the crowd of week-end visitors returned to Paris: they come back again with renewed force and in greater numbers until the finish of the *Grande Semaine*, three weeks hence.

My own peace of mind is intensified, too, since yesterday afternoon, when I saw my "ward" off to Cannes in the Paris train from Deauville. Fortunately, I noticed the friendly face of Mr. Peter Thursby (and his nature is just as friendly as his looks) in the next compartment, and was able to delegate him for duty; he was bound in the same direction.

For I had been accorded the inestimable joy of being accounted as chaperon-guardian to an attractive girl (it is the beginning of the end when parents trust one to that extent), who used me as a sort of base-camp for protection and reinforcements. Hercules would have shrunk from such a task with the *mise-en-scène* of a Casino town.

She had never been to Deauville before, but otherwise has a fair knowledge of Paris and Continental resorts. I must say her presence added considerably to the prestige of our party, which was increased (air-express from England at the shortest of notice) by one permanently love-lorn boy-friend.

In addition to the inevitable improper suggestions, she chalked up one present proposal of marriage and a future one, for he was very young, from an American boy who was just off wandering round the world. I last saw him roaming about on the golf-course at ten o'clock yesterday morning looking for my charge, who had promised to play with him at that hour. As the match was arranged only six hours previously at the Casino, he can be described as a true optimist.

Last night at dinner at the Golf Hotel our dialogue was as follows:—

SHE: "What is that big party of men dining all together?"

SELF: "Two golf teams: an English side brought over annually by Gerald Fairlie to play the French side of André Vagliano."

SHE: "Which is Fairlie?"

SELF: "The big man with the broad back, auburn hair, and moustache. He's the original of Sapper's 'Bulldog Drummond'."

SHE: "Who is Vagliano?"

SELF: "A wealthy banker, one of the mainstays of French amateur golf—perhaps the Halford-Hewitt of it. He usually plays at Saint-Cloud."

SHE: "What's the name of that dark man with a rather fine, hawk-like face at the end of the table?"

SELF: "A most cheerful person except when he is up against you in the Law Courts. He's a famous Barrister, 'Khaki' Roberts. An international footballer, too."

SHE: "Who's that other enormous man?"

SELF (without looking up): "John Morrison. A triple Blue at Cambridge, a magnificent all-round athlete who now designs golf-courses. He's off to Wengen tomorrow to see what he can do for them up there in that line."

SHE: "Surely that's a golfer, that man dining with that pretty girl over there? I saw them get out of a Rolls-Bentley here this evening."

SELF: "That is Jacques Léglise; I should say the best amateur golfer in Europe. He is certainly unbeatable on French courses."

SHE: "Why is he not dining with the rest of the party?"

SELF: "I believe he is going to marry that girl, and he probably wants her to realise quite early that golfers often have bachelor celebration dinners."

By which time the call to the Casino was sounding in the form of the tooting of horns peculiar to French hotel omnibuses, and you must temporarily leave us wending our way down the hill-side to draw up in state (the arrival always seems more dignified than the departure) at the H.Q. of the Syndicat d'Initiative de Deauville.

In the Casino

"Oh joy!" our hearts sang as we jogged along in the omnibus down the hill. And all the time the Casino, like a large, thoughtful cat, sat by and watched. I love scenes of worldly splendour, and gaze on them with eyes much more mild than those of Moses when, at the sight of the Golden Calf and dancing, his heart waxed wrath within him.

My fair companion was already fiddling in her hand-bag for her passport as we approached the entrance of the gambling rooms.

SELF: "You won't need that here."

SHE: "But it's my first visit."

SELF: "Yes, but this is the same staff as at the Casino in Cannes, and they know you there."

SHE: "Oh, yes, I recognise some of those men behind the desk."

SELF: "They will fix up your entry card for you—let's walk round the rooms before we sit down to play."

SHE: "This looks like an Ambassador coming towards us."

SELF: "It is—the one for Deauville, M. André."

M. ANDRÉ (approaching): "*Ah! Mon cher ami, je vous donne bon accueil. Quand vous pourrez quitter cette charmante demoiselle pour quelques instants venons nous asseoir pour bavarder un peu.*"

SHE (as we move round the rooms): "What time does the Big Table begin?"

SELF: "Midnight. I am not sure whether it will be Zographos or his nephew Francopoulos who will play the cards for the Greek Syndicate to-night. It was the nephew this afternoon, that dark young man now talking to André by the *caisse*. He is a very lucky drawer—if he has a two he usually manages to draw a seven to help it to victory."

SHE: "Is the play high here now?"

SELF: "Yes, but not like it was in the days when Citroën would put up a million francs a pop against the Syndicate. Still, you will see that fine old 'grand sportsman' James Hennessy sitting there with a pile of plaques in front of him, as if he were walled in with bricks."

SHE: "Look at the crowd round that roulette table. Something's happening there."

SELF (after inspection): "It's Alberto Dodero putting thousand-franc plaques *en plein* on numbers, about seventeen at a time. They tell me he's just picked up 100,000 francs. He and Edward Robson play as high at roulette as anybody."

SHE: "Do you know that pretty dark girl alongside Dodero?"

SELF: "Betty Sundmark, one of the original of 'Les Girls' at the Dorchester."

SHE: "I see Jasmine Bligh, the television queen, over there. There's another attractive girl with her whom I

often see in the South of France and St. Moritz—I never know her name.”

SELF: “Mareesha (you spell it Marysia) Kraus Ulam. You will have seen her mother, too, with wonderful jewellery; her pearls are like pigeons’ eggs. They have an immense family fortune from timber in Poland. But let me introduce you to Lord Michelham, who will take you off to Brummell’s (the local night club) to dance while I play roulette. He’s a fine dancer and most amusing.”

LORD MICHELHAM: “Did you fly or come by boat?”

SHE: “Flew over with the Olley Air Service in their big four-engined machine. Very comfortable and quick; it did the journey in just under an hour. A fortnight ago I came by Dieppe and motored from there.”

LORD MICHELHAM: “I’ve sold *Atlantis* to Loel Guinness, and have just bought a new boat, though she won’t be ready till October. Why don’t you all come and lunch with me at the Casino Grill to-morrow?”

SELF: “Afraid we’re already booked—it’s a marvellous restaurant, I think. I notice André himself lunches there every day. We ought to try Delage some time, the fish restaurant at Trouville. Also La Truite, near Pont-l’Evêque.”

SHE: “There’s a man over there exactly like ‘Scatters’ Wilson.”

SELF: “That’s Bob, the brother of the great Sir Mathew. He was a Commander in the Navy and is now interested in Welsh Goldfields.”

SHE: “I do wish you would ask Lord Carnarvon to do some of his imitations: I once heard him do the Aga Khan after winning a race at Ascot.”

SELF: “We can’t worry him now; he’s just cashed a

cheque and got his plaques ready for the Big Table to begin."

SHE: "I'd love to see him 'take off' Harry Richman."

SELF: "I saw Richman this evening before dinner. He, Zographos, Bob Ritchie, and Michael Farmer played a golf match this afternoon. Richman had arranged for refreshments on every green, and the half-empties were skilfully hidden by the caddies for their next round. A man had one of these caddies for an evening round, and couldn't make out why he disappeared after each hole. At the fourteenth hole the caddie abandoned the clubs altogether and wandered unsteadily back to the clubhouse."

SHE: "Who is Bob Ritchie?"

SELF: "A big, burly Irishman who was engaged to Jeannette Macdonald for a long time."

SHE: "Oh, I think I remember. Let's see what's happening at this table—nine has come up three times in succession. (And after inspection.) I know the man quite well who's won those coups. It's Cyril Nicholson—I've stayed at his Country Club, Firbeck Hall. He's a grand person—rather shy at first. Isn't he something very big in Sheffield?"

SELF: "Big enough to run the largest stockbroking business that exists out of London. His grip on finance is enormous."

SHE: "There's another man who interests me at this table: I'm sure I saw him once in some police-court."

SELF: "I hope he was not prosecuting you: he's a tiger when roused. That's Claude Hornby, usually visible in Great Marlborough Street Court, and he can compete with West-End crookedness as well as any man in

London. He's a person to remember if you ever make a fool of yourself with a car, too."

SHE: "I see lots of pretty women—rather hard-faced, some of them, like that one who's sitting alone at the bar—do you know who they are?"

SELF: "Some of the old rolling-stock from Maxim's in its former days, though not as it is now. I think one could call them '*Poules Marinières*,' to give them a seaside flavour."

SHE: "By the way, Michael asked me to dance with him just now."

SELF: "I'm sorry, I've arranged for you to dance with Lord Michelham when you are not playing roulette with me."

SHE: "But I think Michael's so amusing."

SELF: "So do I—sometimes, one of which is not usually at three a.m. at a *chemin-de-fer* table."

Sheer peevishness on my part, of course. But the human heart at three a.m. grows weary of the luxury life, and almost cries for green fields and fountains.

At the Races

After one night at the Casino the next day's thought is "*O ubi campi*," and you must follow me with my ward as we venture on to the racecourse. The smoke and stir of the Casino are forgotten for the moment, while we sit sipping our *demi-Evians* after each race beneath the panoply of an orange sun-umbrella, with the pink and red geraniums around, hall-marks of a French racecourse.

"Oh, let's go and talk to Ted and Audrey—they're

sitting under that tree in the shade with Jack Barclay and his wife," suggests my companion.

Off we go and say our "*Bonjour*" to Lord and Lady Doverdale (before her marriage Audrey Pointing, a talented singer and dancer), while he knows almost as much about the inside of a motor-car as Mr. Jack Barclay.

The name Rolls-Royce is inevitably associated with Mr. Barclay, who from a small beginning in Great Portland Street has built up for himself a world-wide reputation as the biggest market in these cars. And to gain such a title can only be the product of honest hard work. In pre-war days the motor trade was much sniffed upon: it is such names in the retail trade as Grigg of the Car Mart, "Bertie" Henly of Henly's, the Rootes brothers, Godfrey Davis with his "car-hire-and-drive-yourself," and Jack Barclay who have raised it to an aristocracy in business.

There was a day when Mr. Barclay—and I think he was one of the original "Bentley Boys"—used to "hit the Casino a rare crack"; now all that is over, for he has the responsibility of about £100,000 worth of Rolls's on his hands, as well as three large London premises.

Life may be a bubble, but it costs much solid cash to keep that bubble floating; let us therefore try to find some of those who can help us to invest our money in as sensible a manner as possible.

The Aga Khan is, unfortunately, not on the course: he will be racing this week-end, for I saw him just before I left the Golf Hotel and had to decline his challenge to a golf match, in which I was bound to have been the loser financially: he is very difficult to defeat on this course. Mentally I should have had a

rare treat, there being no more instructive companion than the Aga Khan.

The horses which take part in the earlier contests at this time of the Deauville season are not characterised by their attention to the book of form, except in the well-known stables. Therefore our first draw for information must be Mr. Dudley Gilroy, who manages Mr. A. K. Macomber's horses, and who confines his interests to the best-class horses. Mr. Macomber has a lovely place near Deauville with a lake containing large, fat, friendly trout which hook themselves with true Gallic courtesy for the entertainment of his friends.

Of course, we could not miss Mr. Berry Wall, who always has an eye for beauty. Mr. Wall was in earnest conversation with Mr. R. B. Strassburger, who has a big stable of horses and keeps literally open house at Deauville.

From these two we gleaned one good winner from the Wertheimer (of Epinard fame) stable, but in the last two seconds before the "off" the price shortened from five to two against six to four on.

A cheerful trio who have just been drawing their winnings from the Tote are Major Kenneth Savory, Mr. Godfrey Davis and Mr. "Tommy" Miles. The first-named is one of the partners in Dorland's Advertising, gained the first D.S.O. in the Flying Corps during the War when he flew over Constantinople, and as a schoolboy at Uppingham was a hero to his contemporaries as if he had stepped straight from the pages of *The Captain* magazine. Mr. Godfrey Davis, in addition to his successful career in the motor world, is one of the shrewdest "backers" of the day in his tilts against the Ring, while Mr. "Tommy" Miles shoots partridges on

Kempton Park Racecourse (of which he is a director) so that his colleagues can enjoy them in the luncheon room on the day of the Duke of York's Handicap in October.

Mr. Ralph Delmé-Radcliffe and Mr. David Heneage seemed to find winners (the former has some horses in France with Willy Pratt) for their party, in which Lady Worthington enhanced the bystanders' comment of: "*Très Mayfair.*"

The one person to whom we should really have gone for advice was Captain Lionel Montague, only he was usually buried in the depths of the weighing-room, consolidating all the information which he had received in the morning. "Cardie," as he is known, probably because his card is so well marked, sits alone on a vantage-point where racing is concerned.

His morning is spent on the telephone assisted by a huge supply of sporting papers, and even as he drives up to the course after his luncheon at the Casino Grill the birds whisper their winners to him.

A pleasant thing about Deauville racecourse is that a man can wear clothes which would be voted at Goodwood, for instance, as "*presque cad.*" White suits, various types of straw hats and panamas, "co-respondent" shoes (white, inset with brown or black leather) can create an air of flamboyance which does not seem out of place on this Hippodrome.

Leaving the races, a visit to the yearling sales is one to be enjoyed by non-racing folk as well as the professionals. There are two establishments which sell the yearlings, on premises decorated like the prettiest of Normandy stud farms, with trim loose-boxes, red-waistcoated grooms, and a profusion of flowers. Of the two firms of

auctioneers one has the nice name of Cheri, and the other is appropriately called "Tattersall Français."

It is an encouraging performance for bidder and spectator alike. There are seats all round, like an outdoor café, with small tables bearing siphons; a bar is very handy, the local children attend in their brightest clothes as at a village feast, and the yearling fillies are not the only beauties to be seen. At least four auctioneers assemble in the rostrum, and they post a couple of out-riders in the audience perched on boxes to abet the proceedings.

The bidding begins like a chant in unison; an advance is heralded by the marker of the new bid, and fresh heart is given to the bidder by the remainder of the choir taking up the chorus at this point. It is a stirring scene, and might be conducted occasionally by Mr. Somerville Tattersall, Mr. Gerald Deane, and Mr. Robert Needham, in some of the duller moments of the Doncaster and Newmarket sales.

What is there to do after the sales? you may wonder. I am not keen on shopping with my ward: being rich she has expensive tastes, and I have still enough gallantry left to dislike seeing girls pay for goods in shops. I don't mind so much if they book it to their account, but most of the transactions in French shops are for cash. So it must be a round of the yachts in the harbour, followed by the same programme as last night—Casino, dinner, Casino.

And so we take leave of one of Europe's nicest pleasure-grounds, where instead of the sweltering summer heat there are cool balmy breezes to clear your head when you wake in the mornings.

IN SEARCH OF SNOW

First Year

PARIS, LEADING TO INNSBRUCK, KITZBUHEL, VIENNA,
MILAN AND ST. MORITZ

PARIS

January

ARABS FOLD THEIR tents and silently steal away in the night; dawn sees them many miles on their journey. In Paris, even on a cold wintry day, cocks crow very early, and sparrows wake even earlier. It is at that moment when these notes are being written; daylight sends me on the road to Zürich. Unless I become snow-bound on an Alpine pass, and emulate one who "carried a banner with the strange device—Excelsior," with nothing but the baying of St. Bernards to cheer my last moments, there should come despatches from Kitzbühel, Vienna, Milan and St. Moritz.

It is said there has been little or no snow at Kitzbühel, the only white to have been seen is that of the daisies; now I hear that the snow is falling heavily there, and plenty lies already at St. Anton, which is quite close to it. Experts on winter sports say that it is rarely profitable to visit one of these resorts below 5,000 feet before the first week in January. St. Moritz is 6,000 feet up, and has had plenty of snow; from what I hear of the huge crowd there, they would not care if it snowed ink as long as the Palace bar did not run dry.

At La Scala, Milan, I must be present when Mascagni himself conducts his opera *Nero*. Remember that the auditorium of La Scala is not as big as that of Covent Garden, and that the Milanese just clamour for admittance on such an occasion. But if I have to be carried in on to the stage with the crowd as a dead soldier in the

fiddling scene when Rome is burning, I shall be there. Mascagni is a great national hero in Italy: *Cavalleria Rusticana* was the masterpiece of his youthful genius, which has never been repeated: forty-five years later he still continues his attempts.



My journey across the Channel impressed upon me the great efficiency of the night-flying service of Imperial Airways. When leaving London at six-thirty on a summer's evening one has the prescience of a pleasant trip, with the heat of the day waning and the glare of the sun not so strong. In the winter it is different; there are mists, storms, clouds, and the darkness. And when I left there was a gale and there was rain: Croydon aerodrome could not help its look of depression.

As the machine leaves the ground one sees the receding panorama of London's lights, with the Croydon control-tower flashing its signals. In the air it seems as though one is in a ship at night: nearly all the passengers are lulled to sleep, though one always gets that awakening bump crossing the French coast at Criel-sur-Mer, near Dieppe. I know that my friendly cheese-maker, M. Plantard (who has the giant trout of which I write elsewhere), putting his Excelsiors and Camemberts to bed for the night, often looks up at the brilliantly lighted aeroplane as it passes over.

The sight of the beacon flashing from Le Bourget makes all the passengers look out of the window. To the half-right are the twinkling lights of Paris:

Mysterious city—
City of pleasures,
Of gay music and dancing,
Of painted and beautiful women—
Wondrous city!
Unveiling but to those who,
Shunning day,
Live through the night
And return home
To the sound of awakening streets
And the rising dawn.

—as Delius prefaced his lovely nocturne, "Paris: The Song of a Great City."

And then the descent. The searchlights flash across the aerodrome, making it like a stage: the aeroplane's wheels first touch the ground at the exact spot where the light begins, and the machine runs in like a ship into harbour.

Imperial Airways certainly do their best in unpleasant weather conditions even on a dirty day: fogs, rain, and storms seem a long way off when one is skimming over the white billowy surface of clouds in brilliant sunshine and blue sky all round. And in their new and larger motor-coaches between Le Bourget and Paris one can now read in comfort the advertisement signs on the way: "*Baptêmes de l'Air—50 francs*"; "*Au Lapin Sauté*," such a delightful name for a restaurant: "*Divorces rapides, consultations 5 francs*," a very cheap offer from the legal fraternity.

* * * *

A fair criticism of this visit to Paris would be that it is ringed with levity. Why did I "cut" my lectures at the Sorbonne? Why did I not see Montmartre with its

Sacré-Cœur by day, instead of only by night and without the Sacré-Cœur? Why did not I, as usual, go to Saint-Clotilde and view the organ-loft where César Franck created his immortal works? Nor have I visited any art galleries or museums filled with seventeenth-century pieces. I am sorry, but the Christmas-holiday atmosphere is still here; the calls of the *Grand Guignol* and the circus supervened instead.

It is pleasant to eat alone sometimes, especially when the food is very good. There is no chance of one's companion bringing to the table a half-finished cigarette, which, when deposited on a plate, successfully fumigates the bread and the butter. Nor will a cigarette be lighted during or too soon after a meal, just when one is trying out some new cheese. Sample one day some *Aurore*, a Norman cheese on Camembert lines, or *la boule de Lille*, which is a hard red cheese like a Cheshire, or some *Cendre*, much too strong for me.

Smart Parisians are like a herd of gnus: both breeds change their feeding-grounds and water-holes with great regularity. As it happens, the herd has temporarily rather deserted the Place Vendôme area and has moved in force to the Champs-Élysées. The popular bars (you will hardly get a seat in them at seven o'clock) are the Chiberta, Georges Carpentier's, the St. Moritz, and as far as the hotels are concerned the George V remains the most crowded place for luncheon and at cocktail time.

Maxim's was in the same state as it is on all Friday nights—full. One could have seen Count Armand de La Rochefoucauld, a mine of information about Paris life, who tells excellent stories against himself (often rather exaggerated, but it makes them more amusing), and

M. Alfred Bustos, another man "without whom no party is complete," whose moustache is so perfect that a replica should be sent to the Louvre for its commemoration to posterity.

Looking round the room, I thought how pretty were all the women; thinking it over, I realised that it was because one was not quite so accustomed to their faces as to those in a London restaurant. Similarly, Frenchmen coming to London always remark on the beauty of our women.

Going to the Bal Tabarin from Maxim's, we had as our chauffeur "Landru." I sat in front with him in his car, remarking that the temperature was four degrees below zero, so he kindly unwrapped his scarf for me to put round my neck. He has such a long beard that I put the scarf round my knees instead. "Landru" disdains the use of a motor-horn; in its place he gives a very fair imitation of a siren, with a trill in his voice which Lily Pons would envy.

Victor seems for ever to rule the night-club world of Montmartre at his *Chez* Florence; between one and two a.m. it is jammed full. It was there that I saw an attractive Spanish girl whom a rich Englishman had promised to marry if she learned English and also to play golf. The girl spent her days walking round golf-courses with an English dictionary in one hand and a golf-club in the other, but she is not yet married.

After *Chez* Florence, or a visit to the newly-opened Bagatelle, there is generally a move in the direction of the Monte Cristo, or one of those Russianish places, such as Casanova and Schéhérazade. None of them are cheap. At one night club (not one of those mentioned) Count Armand de La Rochefoucauld found that his companion

was one of those women who get furious if their escorts query the prices. The poor man was charged 800 francs, for the girl had ordered champagne at 260 francs a bottle and plates of caviare sandwiches at 50 francs a sandwich.

Saint-Cloud golf-course is under snow this morning; many who would be playing there were soon back in the Travellers' Club, preparing for an afternoon of bridge or backgammon. Major Charles Anderson awaited a game of chess, his golf-match with Count Louis de Montgomery, one of the only two scratch amateurs in the country, having been postponed.

The pretty Parisian débutantes have been running round all day with collecting-boxes for a hospital. They waited outside the churches after Mass and then paid calls on likely subscribers. In Fouquet's Mlle Martine Petit Le Roy, one of the most popular and attractive of her contemporaries, made almost one quarter of her morning's collection in one coup from Mr. Israel Sieff, of Marks and Spencer fame.

The *Grand Guignol's* programme was disappointing for those who like and expect to see the usual quota of black-bearded doctors, operating tables, paralytics, lunatics, and epers: in fact, the humorous sketches were much the best. One husband shoots himself as he is broadcasting, while the wife and her lover are listening-in; as he fired the revolver straight into the wings his demise must have been due to a ricochet.

Even my old friend René Chemier, who almost calls for a coffin the moment he steps on the stage, was alive at the end of the big drama. In the part of a film director he wore a Palm Beach suit, rather resembling Alexander Korda.

Paris always flocks at this season to the circus, exhibiting the same *élan* to the turns at the Cirque Medrano as we do to Bertram Mills *et Cie* at Olympia. Togare and his tigers are as popular here as when they toured our provincial cities for two years with Bertram Mills. An occasional gamble on a racecourse is the trainer's sole relaxation from tiger-training.

INNSBRUCK

January

"HANNIBAL CROSSED THE ALPS." Thus briefly does Livy tell us of one of the greatest achievements in history. Every person who now crosses the Alps by modern means of transport must realise that the Carthaginians can have had no picnicking on their trip; even if on one's own voyage there may be trivial yet amusing incidents, none of them can detract one whit from the wonderful majesty of these mighty mountains.

As I forecast might happen, there *was* a hitch on our journey. Very heavy snow had fallen overnight on either side of the Arlberg Pass, leading from Switzerland to Austria: luckily it was not a case for St. Bernards and monks searching all night for us with lanterns and liqueurs.

My companion on the trip, who should not be recognisable if I call him S., is one of those fortunate people able to devote their entire incomes to themselves. His two present passions in life are music and a new Rolls-Royce, in which we sped from Paris to Bâle in exactly the same running time as is taken by the Arlberg-Orient express.

After spending the night in the Baur-au-Lac Hotel at Zürich, we passed by Wallen-See, a grand yet gloomy sheet of water. S. at once started to discourse upon the life of Liszt, who had parked himself with the Comtesse d'Agoult at the end of the lake, and had written many of his compositions there. The sight of the composer and

the Countess trolling for trout in the lake is still within memory of the oldest inhabitants.

We passed through Buchs into Liechtenstein, which, though a principality on its own, has Swiss currency with a prince or two of its own. Here we crossed the Rhine, that river so thought-suggesting of castles, hock, Lorelei (Liszt always lives in our hearts), and those three maidens whose loss of a ring of gold in its waters inspired a theme which has kept opera houses and singers in affluence for the past sixty years.

At the Austrian frontier we were asked if we carried any bombs in the car: it is hardly a declaration to which one would own, even were it true.

It was at Stuben, just before ascending to the Arlberg Pass, that the heavy snow became very apparent. As the top of the Arlberg Pass is shut from December to March, one gets on the train at Langen, the car has to be hitched on a truck behind, and one is whisked through the tunnel to emerge at St. Anton. S. was already suffering from a bout of time-fever. "There's no need or time for any lunch," he grumbled; "the train'll be in at any minute, and we've got to get the car on board."

Somehow he was persuaded that we had an extra hour in hand, due to some local juggling with Central European clocks, yet the middle of my second *Kirsch* saw me hastily ushered out into the cold. And, unfortunately, the chains on the wheels of the car had not been properly adjusted, so it was not easy to get it out of the snow on to the truck.

S., who had meanwhile cleverly received some mysterious messages from Vienna, was getting still more agitated, and walked round and round the car biting his nails rather like Cruikshank's picture of Fagin in the

condemned cell in *Oliver Twist*. He was hatless, and wearing a magnificent fur coat which would have done credit even to Lord Portarlington. A discreet dark grey in colour, it was lined with lovely pelt (mink or beaver) which also provided the collar and two very long lapels. His dark suit peering from beneath this lordly confection gave the whole ensemble a touch of dignity which was rather misplaced in these surroundings.

By this time a crowd had collected to help dig the car out of the snow. There were ski-ers going through on the train to St. Anton: there were sleighs with horses on which the yellow bells were tinkling: there were sledges with dogs; there were agile small boys on skis, among all of which this huge car, as well as S., looked rather lost. Fed up to the teeth, S. suddenly delivered a vicious kick at one of the back wheels, stubbed the toe of his patent leather shoe, and slipped up on his back.

The lovely fur coat was smothered in snow. "I don't think it's at all funny, do you?" he giggled, with a sadly twisted grin. I thought it was very funny, but didn't say so. The bystanders thought the same, and said so.

We arrived eventually at St. Anton, S. allowing a very short time to have a look at it before going on to Innsbruck. Black, ant-like figures on the slopes of hills were the ski-ers making their descent before dark. St. Anton can be described as a resort for the hardy ski-er, for there is no cable railway to drag one to the top of a lofty Alp. But if one is doing a final practice for the Kandahar Cup, I am told, the slopes are just what are wanted.

There only seemed to be one hotel, the Post; I expect there are plenty of nice *pensions* (lights out at 9 p.m.) if you look carefully. St. Anton is a favourite resort of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, who take their ski-ing very

seriously. Royalty never undertake any sport unless determined to do it well: in consequence they set as fine an example in the snow-fields of Europe as in the Court circles of Buckingham Palace.

The Hugh Campbell family is loyalty itself to St. Anton: they have motored out there from England for five successive years, so will have glimmerings of sympathy for us in our minor troubles. S., during our short halt, was supervising the chauffeur in the readjustment of the chains on the wheels, impatient to be on the road to Innsbruck. Colonel Campbell is as bold an operator in the world of finance as he was in the world of war from 1914 to 1918, when he collected a D.S.O. and an O.B.E. He is always cheerful, and very encouraging to the younger generation.

"How are your two-year-olds?" I ask Mr. Ernest Thornton Smith, whom I visualise more at the steps of a racecourse weighing-room talking to his trainer Fred Templeman than on the snow-slopes, though he was an international ice-hockey player. His answer is typically Delphic: "Some will be able to run, others will not. We shall weed those out." A very successful owner, a shrewd power in big financial deals, a Government director on the Pig Marketing Board, he ladles out Christmas hospitality to the villagers on his Telscombe estate with all the *bonhomie* of a Sussex Squire. I only hope he offers his friends the chance to participate in his more mundane "good things" with equal zest: there would be little poverty in that large circle.

All the little Tyrolean villages in the valley leading to Innsbruck provide good ski-ing, and at Innsbruck itself there is luxury ski-ing; the hotels are big and good, there are cable-railways up the mountains, and

actually a night club reputed to be quite gay during the university terms.

S. has come in to say that we must be on the way to Vienna at dawn: like executioners and firing-squads, it seems his favourite starting time; fortunately, he is not a golfer. He is to leave me at Kitzbühel, and intends to be in Vienna for dinner. It is snowing very hard and he has a mountainous journey to Salzburg: it is not too bad after that, so I can just wish him the best of luck and hope to be in that city myself in a few days to see the cause of his reunion in Vienna.

KITZBÜHEL, AUSTRIAN TYROL

January

DESIGNERS OF Christmas cards could have no better subject than this charming little Tyrolean town as it is to-day. There is all the snow that one can want, the temperature is about ten degrees below zero, the sun shines in the daytime, and everybody is happy. At a ski-ing resort when there is no snow visitors get as snappy as a posse of retired military men on a salmon river, waiting for a spate.

One can call Kitzbühel a town when one sees the size of other Tyrolean villages; it is still not too spoilt, prices are reasonable, and even if you do not ski you can spend a very pleasant time. The inhabitants retain a delightful simplicity. On Christmas Eve three peasants, representing the Wise Men of the East, went round all the houses in the town, blessed each room, and offered little Christmas gifts. On every grave in the churchyard was a lighted Christmas tree; even the poorest grave had a tiny tree.

At five o'clock every evening the whole population seems to meet at Reisch for a *thé dansant*. All the snow-girls come in their ski-ing clothes, straight off the mountain slopes. In the bar of the Grand Hotel one can enjoy night life as at the Florida, for instance; there are gala nights, too, at the Reisch café, but everything shuts at midnight. There is a heavy fine if anything is kept open longer.

You are about to start off for a morning's ski-ing.

The first thing is to try to pronounce the word correctly—should it be “*skee-ing*” or “*shee-ing*”? Nobody seems really to know, although Captain D’Arcy Rutherford, for some years secretary of the Corviglia Ski Club at St. Moritz, says that it should be “*skee-ing*.” Possibly he is a keen student of etymology.

Clad in dark blue trouserettes (dark blue or dark green are the colours to wear) and rather resembling a long-shoreman, you shoulder your skis, pocket the unconsumed portion of the day’s ration, and put on a cap which makes you look like a cross between an apache and a railway porter; then you are almost ready to start. You must now decide whether you will walk quietly to the Nursery Slopes, where you may also watch the training of the world’s champion ski-ers, as well as emulate them yourself, or there is another alternative.

Slung in a sort of fruit-crate, you can, surely but slowly, be conducted to the top of a very high mountain, the journey taking some fifteen minutes. During this time you have every opportunity to meditate upon your past misdeeds and to select your fellow-passenger with whom to link hands should the cable break: there is a sheer drop of about a thousand feet. But this particular cable is guaranteed for forty years, and it is only five years old now. From the top of this mountain, Hahnenkamm, there are twenty-two ski-runs in which the experts revel. These fellows take about a quarter of an hour to come down; others take anything up to three hours. It seems to depend on one’s companion.

The Arlberg system, originated by a Norwegian who visited these slopes some twenty years ago, is the method you must adopt of ski-ing: it is a crouching position, as against the former upright position. As a novice you

must first learn the "snow plough," which enables you to pull yourself up somehow or other; the next item is the "*Stembogen*" or turning, and then you start on "*Christiania*" or "*Christis*." This entails a swift descent and a sharp stop: the snow flies up, and you stand up. It is the last action which is difficult, and when mastered you are qualified to wear badges with chamois on them.

Lesser snow sports include *ski-joring* (being pulled behind two horses when you are on skis) and going for sleigh drives: snowballing and sliding are very decidedly not at all in the fashion. A two-horse sleigh (horses must have *Glocken*, or bells, on them), piles of rugs, and a charming companion make a pleasant change from the hard work of ski-ing.

There is a certain technique in the preparation for a sleigh drive, a sport rightly viewed with intense suspicion by young husbands and fiancés. To qualify as an escort you must have hurt yourself on the ski-fields, or be permanently unfit for active service, else even the quarry herself may view you with qualms, and put you in the "cissy" class. Rarely does our sturdiest snow-girl (she must have pretensions to prettiness, else does not qualify as a sleigh-drive quarry) pine for that daily dose, the Long Run.

See her sometimes wilt and wince when in the evening the next day's programme is under discussion. The "strong men" plan to catch the nine o'clock funicular, to take out lunch, and return, with luck, at four: this may be just the day when she wants to have a long sleep, have her hair done, eat a meal not consisting of ham jammed in a roll, chocolate and orange, and spend an afternoon shopping in the local *Sporthaus*. Here you interpose: "Did you hurt your leg when you slipped on the Nursery

slopes this evening?" to which you will probably get a grateful: "Oh yes, it is rather painful—I hadn't told anybody about it."

Now comes your chance and you offer the bait: "As a matter of fact, I thought of going for a sleigh drive to-morrow afternoon, to see that wonderful *Schloss* about five miles away. Why don't you come too?" If she takes the fly at the first cast you will get some dirty looks from the opposition, so here you must quickly add: "But it does seem a pity to miss that grand run—perhaps they can change it till another day." Murmurings about best guides being booked and other runs planned ahead for the rest of the week set you at ease again, and you arrange to meet in the hotel bar at twelve-thirty next day.

With a clear field at that hour you can talk things over, and have a large luncheon with plenty of Enzian, a liqueur made from blue mountain flowers. Some people are lucky enough to dispense with the actual sleigh drive, and sit playing six pack bezique, backgammon or some other indoor sport until the main body returns from its excursion. On the other hand, a sleigh drive in pleasant company is no hardship, and half an hour's smart trotting will be sure to bring you within range of a *Gasthaus*, where you may indulge in some hot *Gluhwein* and, like Lenau's Faust, have a dance in the village inn.

Full of local lore you return about six o'clock to dispense it to the main body in the bar: if there are any nasty remarks about being late, point out that possibly it is not realised in such company that the horses have to be watered and fed. Have they ever timed an Austrian nose-bag?

VIENNA

January

"THEN THE SNOW CAME, and after the snow came the frost. The streets looked as though they were made of silver, they were so bright and glistening; long icicles like crystal daggers hung down from the eaves of the houses; everybody went about in furs, and the little boys wore scarlet caps and skated on the ice." This is Vienna to-day. It is obviously very cold, being the customary mid-European ten degrees below zero all day long, and a few additional degrees lower at night. The streets are rather slippery on account of the frozen snow, but there is never very far to walk.

All the main interests seem to centre round the Opera House, which is right in the middle of the city. Everybody has a fur coat, or at least a coat that has fur attached: even the poorest seem to mobilise pieces of cat, rat or rabbit with which to adorn their coat-collars. And if you walk into a hotel or restaurant wearing one of those lovely-looking black fur caps, complete with ear-flaps, nobody looks at you twice.

Life has a rather serious air here. There is not a great deal of money about, the standard of education is remarkably high, and to obtain employment in the legal, scientific, medical, literary, or musical profession is very difficult unless one has exceptional talent. There is not much left of the traditional gay Viennese waltzes and the frolics with which one associates this city. But the serious side of music holds its own as firmly as ever in the world.

What of the night life? Saturdays and Sundays are the bright nights, when possibly "le smoking" is worn—but I saw not one white tie during the time I was there. In company with Baron Charles Buxhoevden and Count Harald Knagenhjelm one is in the best hands to see the city at night: Sir Robert Throckmorton and Lord Brecknock might possibly be their counterparts in London.

You do not dine before going to opera, cinema or theatre. At about ten-thirty people will be found dining at the Bristol, the Grand, or the Three Hussars; then you move on to the night clubs, such as the Rötter, a charming small room with old panelling; the Femina, where there is a cabaret on music-hall lines; the Eden Bar or the Kaiser Bar, which is supposed to be the most fashionable. There is also a place called The House of Passion—to which one can take a sub-débutante sister without any qualms. Swinging about, and alone, in a hammock seems to be the most cheerful item in its programme.

At midday the best rendezvous is the Sacher Bar, where the *plat du jour* for luncheon is always excellent. Here one may see Mr. Sidney Beer, who has probably just come from the concert hall after a rehearsal, and Prince Tassilo Fürstenberg, the great expert on shooting and fishing, who is sure to have news of thousands of wild duck on the Danube now that its edges are frozen. The small Danube, which runs through the city, is about twice the breadth of the Regent Canal and equally muddy. The big Danube, just outside the city, is a most impressive sight, though equally muddy.

The "smart young marrieds" of Vienna are Count and Countess Seilern, who give the best parties. Prince and Princess Ulrich Kinsky also entertain in the Palais

Kinsky, one of the few really big palaces which are kept up in the grand style. If you happen to catch Richard Tauber in Vienna you are lucky, for he and his wife Diana Napier certainly know their way about. Ask the Queensberrys, the Richard Hart-Davises and Captain Tim Healy how they enjoyed themselves as their guests one Christmas.

I have Tauber's old suite in the Bristol Hotel. Looking at the Bösendorfer grand piano, I wonder how many times, before his marriage, of course, it has emitted the strains of "*Ich lieb' dich*" for the famous tenor. The best singer of Mozart of this generation, he is a supreme artist when he abandons that vocal trickery which fills his bank manager's heart with joy and that of the true music lover with sorrow.

In England, at the first sign of snow and frost, anyone who can muster a pair of skis and the leisure time makes a dart towards the surrounding heights. Had we a winter of more regular snow, I feel sure that each Saturday and Sunday in London would see the younger generation emerging from their houses carrying their skis ready to take a train or motor-omnibus to the nearest hills. In Vienna on a Sunday morning one sees everybody making for the railway station, ready to go to the heights of Semmering, an hour away in the train: to the Austrian it is just the same as to the Englishman getting out his golf-bag.

This north-east wind, with snowy conditions and bright sun, provides an exhilarating tonic for those who can stand it. These are the conditions which prevail in mid-European cities all the winter; New York is even colder. It is this cold which is said to affect the Americans with their intense capacity for

energy. They have the other side of the picture in the summer, with about ninety per cent humidity in the atmosphere.

* * * *

Imperial Vienna may not pass this way again, but it has left behind some imperishable monuments, one of which is its *Staatsoper*. The ancient splendour is rarely to be seen in the audience; it remains in the performances, the orchestra, the scenery, the lighting, and the production. There are some in Vienna who still sit about tearfully in corners and sigh for the "good old days," reminding one that they have not been to the Opera House since the Emperor Franz Joseph died. Surely they would help more by thinking of the "better new days," and in any case they have missed a great deal by not having attended the opera.

Performances start early, about seven or seven-thirty p.m., and finish about ten-thirty. I left the Orient express to come straight to the Opera House and creep into the back of a box during the first act of *Lohengrin*, which was being conducted by Dr. Weingartner. And Weingartner was a pupil of Liszt, and was in his box at Bayreuth during the performance of *Tristan* at which Liszt was taken ill two days before his death. And it was Liszt who, at Weimar in 1850, conducted the first performance of *Lohengrin*; the link was therefore of great interest.

The orchestra played beautifully, as they did in *Pagliacci* the next night, where Völker gave a magnificent performance. Some of these Italian operas go very well in German—but not all of them. On a rather "off" evening, too, an orchestral player, finding himself with a good many bars' rest before he comes in again,

may take his salami sandwich from his pocket and complete his dinner.

The opera is full every night; in the interval there is plenty of room to walk about, for the foyers are bigger than at Covent Garden. In the bars are found those wonderful chocolate cakes, the recipes for which were found in Frau Sacher's possession after her death; until then she had kept their secret. Tail-coats one never sees except on special gala occasions: some nights there are quite a few dinner jackets, and generally a few officers in uniform. The audience may be rather drab and dull, but they know more in Vienna of the classics of music than in any other city in the world.

As to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, a strange conductor has some difficulty in rehearsing them. He may say: "I will increase the tempo here a little," to which there is possibly the reply: "Well, Brahms took special care never to hurry this passage." For the past seventy-five years this orchestra has been giving its series of eight yearly concerts in the "Large Hall of the Society of Friends of Music," as the building is termed.

It was at one of these concerts that I heard Albert Coates conduct the first performance outside Russia of a symphony of Shaporin. It seemed a mixture of Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Stravinsky, and in the last movement I noted eight extra trumpeters and trombone players moving quietly into the organ gallery and the organist also taking his place. Shaporin, who is about forty-five years old, is one only of the many Soviet composers whose works are not known outside Russia.

MILAN

January

ONE OF THE WAGONS-LITS company's minor efforts in the way of sleeping-cars (a dingy light chocolate affair, as if in obstinate opposition to those lovely blue coaches which grace the Simplon or Arlberg-Orient expresses) conducted me from Vienna by Klagenfurt, Tarvisio, the Venetian Alps, skirting the edge of Lake Garda, through Brescia into Milan. Overnight my carriage had changed its name from *Schlafwagen* to *carrozza con letti*; there was a nip in the air on the usually sultry plains of Lombardy. Snow lay on the ground.

The city of Verona, pink, gold, and white beneath its snow-covered hills, looked so cold—cold enough to have cooled even Romeo's love for Juliet. Perhaps they fell in love in the spring.

In the restaurant car my worst fears were confirmed: on the menus was the word "Spaghetti." Fond as I am of it and never shrinking from eating it when in the company of my fellow-countrymen, it is a nerve-racking ordeal to do so when surrounded by professionals feeding on their home-ground. The preliminary twiddle of the fork, impaling these lengthy creeper-like drain-pipes, is easy, so is the ascent to the mouth. It is in the finishing touches where one fails. Mine ends amid my blushes on the plate; the Italian misses not one fraction of this errant food.

Is there a more imposing railway station in the world than at Milan? The Grand Central Railway in New York

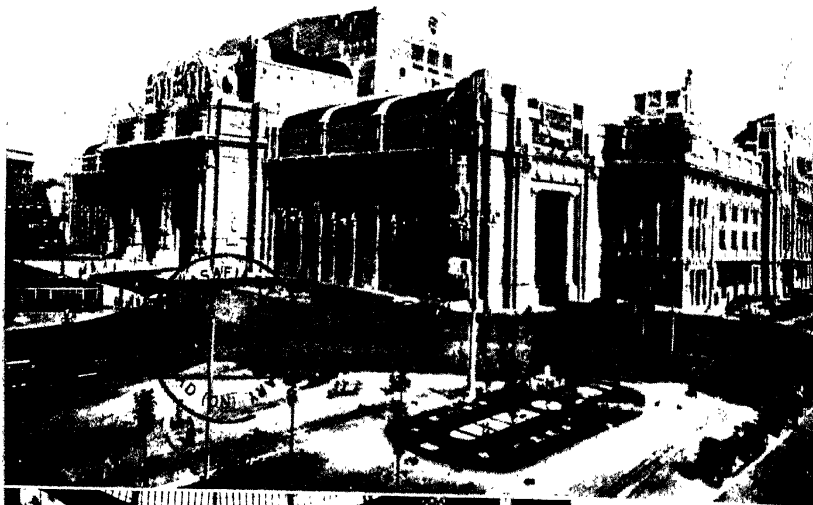


SCHLOSS MITTERSILL NEAR KITZBUHEL.



A KITZBUHEL GROUP

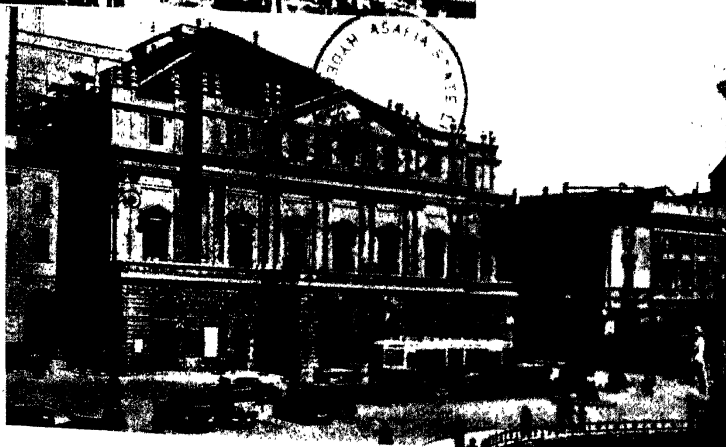
COMTESSE HENRI DE CASTELLANE,
 COMTE HENRI DE CASTELLANE,
 M. L. ZERVERDACHI, MISS WYNNE,
 VICOMTE DE BONCHAMPS,
 MADAME A. LOPEZ, EUGENIO LOPEZ,



THE CENTRAL STATION
MILAN.
(Fotocolor, Turin)



THE GALLERIA, MILAN.
(A. Traldi, Milan)



had better build itself another station if it wishes to keep up its tradition of being the finest, for Milan has it beaten. This city, since I saw it seventeen years ago, is absolutely transformed: the wonderful station is only one of Mussolini's great works. And the most modern hotel in the city is the Excelsior Gallia, adjoining the station. It is run by M. Vittorio Gallia, whose family are big people in the hotel world of Italy (they own the Continental here also), rather corresponding to the Dombres at Villa d'Este on Lake Como.

I have not seen one glimmer of antipathy towards us in this country. I think one can be right to take as a barometer such a place as the Galleria, for in these high lofty galleries the Milanese walk up and down all day and late into the evening, eyeing all strangers. And the Italian stares, especially at foreign girls, with a haughty insolence which is nevertheless complimentary. He will rarely look twice at the women of his own country: the dark typical Southern type does not appeal to him at all; moreover, he rates them as passionless. Yet let him but sight a tallish American or English blonde and he will give you a rare demonstration in the art of *cavalleria*.

On either side of the galleries are cafés and restaurants where one can sit and watch the passers-by. There used to be the famous restaurant Campari's, but it is now a series of drinking bars: I asked the barman if Bigliardi's was a good place in which to eat, farther down the Arcade. He replied that one could only play billiards there, and recommended Savini's.

Here the *maitre d'hôtel*, who had once been at the Savoy in London, made me drink some *soave*, a light dry white wine, containing only eleven degrees of alcohol.

But I fear it does not travel, which is a pity, for it only costs under two shillings a bottle. There is, too, a local Camembert type of cheese, *introbio*, and of course the gorgonzola which one eats there is a very different fellow from that which we usually see in England, lying miserably in its chalky whiteness beneath a glass lid.

There is in the exact centre of the Galleria a fetish which should be respected in true Milanese fashion by all musicians and singers, present and future. Inlaid in the floor stone is the mosaic of a bull, and you should grind your heel on his hind-quarters to bring you good fortune in your musical career.

Quite a cosmopolitan colony of student musicians resides in Milan, known as the "*ambiente musicale*." They are mostly English and American girls of independent means who have come here to study music, and study love as well. They "park down" with some charming Italian (marriage is not necessary) and continue for years with their singing lessons, though often changing the teacher of both arts. When one of the circle at last gives a concert or perhaps gets a small part in a provincial opera house, all the rest flock off to hear her.

And could they have sung the part better themselves? Hear their comments afterwards.

* * * *

I have never known any musical function with such an electric atmosphere as at La Scala on the first night of *Nero*; the Italian temperament seemed to sizzle in every member of the audience. "*Maestro, maestro! Viva Mascagni!*" they cried for a quarter of an hour after the curtain fell. I know not Covent Garden

in its pre-war gala days, but I have seen no such scene in an opera house as at the *première* of *Nero*.

The setting in the audience as well as on the stage was enthralling—policemen with their Napoleonic hats, officers carrying huge helmets, the fronts of the boxes garlanded with flowers, everybody standing up in stalls and boxes until the last moment before the beginning of each act, and Mascagni being frantically cheered at the curtains.

The attendants, in black knee-breeches and coats hung with huge chains of office, ushered into their boxes the *Podestà* (the Lord Mayor of Milan), and the Duc Visconti di Modrone, who is also the president of La Scala. The Duke of Bergamo, cousin of the King of Italy, wore the uniform of an infantry general; Count Galeazzo Ciano represented the Government. Not one word of English did I hear spoken in any of the *entr'actes*: the audience seemed to be entirely Italian.

The "hissing" at the beginning of each act is very noticeable. Be there undue movement or a whispered word, the hisses begin in the stalls and are taken up (rather more politely) by the occupants of the first tier of boxes. The best seats were very expensive, 400 lire for a stall; the gallery seats were cheap, so as to give the general public a chance to cheer their hero.

The scenery and production certainly helped along the music, in which Mascagni essays some Wagnerian passages: the lighting on the terrace of Nero's golden palace illuminates the glories of Ancient Rome. The portly emperor himself was not shown at his worst: he may get slightly bibulous at times, otherwise he is portrayed as a sentimental singer to his lyre. There is a grand orchestral climax to the end of the first act; Nero's

death was almost unwelcome (every operatic hero has to die), but the song of Egloge, the slave girl, just before she sings her duet with the Emperor in the second act, was really moving, each verse beginning with a slow upward-scale passage. Aureliano Pertile, whom we heard at Covent Garden a few years ago, took the tremendous part of Nero, singing finely, if at times rather roughly.

There will be a big difference in the music which I shall hear to-morrow night in St. Moritz, though once I heard Jean Norris play Chopin and Liszt at Suvretta House; there is sure to be a gala night in one of the hotels. Seven hours in the train over the Bernina Pass should get me from Milan to St. Moritz in time for a long session at the Palace Bar and an evening of strains as hail from some such combine as Mokey Bob and his Sixteen Scallywags, always aided and abetted by a crooner.

ST. MORITZ

January

LIFE AT ST. MORITZ is in two distinct categories—before and after the darkness which falls at about five o'clock. At four o'clock, as soon as the sun has hidden itself behind an Alp and its rays no longer bathe this little town in sunshine, it is wise to retreat to the safety of the *chauffage central*. Some visitors never leave its protection at all, and descend for their first appearance of the day into the hall of the hotel at the time visitors should be arriving from England—about four o'clock.

Let us picture your arrival at the Palace Hotel. If you are a stranger to St. Moritz you may be a little nervous of passing through the swing-door and moving into a large lounge which looks like that of a big seaside hotel, to see the imposing snow-kit worn, to hear the snow-talk falling glibly from the lips of everybody, to gaze with admiration at the collection of silver-and-bronze badges worn by snow-sporters, and in consequence to feel a little lonely.

Here I am luckily in a position to reassure you. For the snow-kit can be got in the morning, you will have mastered all the snow-talk by the first evening, all the badges (with the exception of about three) can be bought at one of the shops, and as for feeling lonely, that is where Mr. "Billy" Reardon takes a hand.

Of course, if you are the sort of person who is greeted

on arrival with such phrases as: "Goodness me, there's old Podger!" "Come and sit with us, old boy!" "Where on earth have *you* sprung from?" Mr. Reardon will rightly neglect you. Otherwise this charming American will gently shepherd you to the bar, stand you a drink, and put you entirely at your ease with regard to the social situation. He will pay for your drink, but you must not expect him to pay for others in the future, because he has to do the same for all the shy guests who arrive.

There is one point which one must stress. For the first two days of your visit you must take things very easily, for St. Moritz is just 6,000 feet above sea-level, and it takes most people a few days to become acclimatised. The heart may beat faster, leading to such unpleasantnesses as headaches and nose-bleeding if one overdoes things. So go easy both outdoors and indoors. That extra bit of ski-ing and that very, very late whisky-and-soda at night must be avoided for the first few days.

At six o'clock sharp sounds the "Call-to-the-bar," when St. Moritz in general converges upon the Palace Bar. You can walk in. Mr. Reardon's table is on the left, and will be full of the last-joined "distinguished visitors." Nod pleasantly to Mr. Reardon, for remember that he can present you, if he likes, to that lovely German film star with whom you want to dance, to ask him to introduce your wife to one of those good-looking young Italian princes or counts, whose faultless dress often belies their prowess at out-door sport.

When you get to the bar, abandon all thoughts of economics, for your holiday will be spoiled if you keep working out the rate of Swiss francs to the pound.

The hotels do their best as regards prices, but certainly once you poke your nose out of the door there is an icy draught through your pocket.

All around you hear English as the predominating tongue, then German, then Italian, and then French. Let us look round the bar or at the dance floor. There is a cheer when Lord Hindlip comes in complete in his skiing kit. He had arrived in the morning in his "best Londons," had changed later to a "sports suit" which made people cry: "Six to four the field!" and now is as well dressed for the snow as anybody.

There's Jack Heaton, that tall, dark good-looking American who excels at snow-sports. He is not a hearty conversationalist, though in that respect can be classed as an orator when compared with his brother. His lack of small-talk may cause the impression of an affectation of superiority: those who know him well consider this an ill-judged thought.

"Badrutt! Where's Badrutt?" calls out Count Kurt Haugwitz-Reventlow, just on the point of leaving. There is some query which he wishes to assess correctly before his departure. Personally I assess Hans Badrutt as a very high person in his own country, and hope that I shall always have the grace to address him as Mr. Badrutt. I am happy to follow the example of princes and other counts.

Give a good hand to Mr. Harry Hays Morgan, president of the Cresta Run. He looks a young man when wearing his crash helmet on the Run: he is bald when he takes it off, and all respect his courage to go regularly down the Cresta at his age. He breathes a prayer before his toboggan faces the Run: I would tell a rosary not to have to go down it.

The season must be at its height, for Sir Hugh Seely is here. Like Mr. Ivor Guest, his presence at a Continental resort indicates that its barometer of social significance is at its highest peak. Mr. Ralph Harbord and his sister Betty are sure to be dining in Mrs. Beatrice Cartwright's big party to-night. "Auntie B.," as you may sometimes call her, is not nearly so imperious as she looks, has a heart as well as a pocket of gold, and entertains truly magnificently.

A quiet drink at Lady Lyons' table will pass a pleasant hour before preparing for the gala dinner (same food as usual with streamers and balloons added). Both she and Sir Henry diffuse an air of solid tranquillity which is very restful: he is a man, too, of immense energy, whether in the field of insurance, polo, shooting, hunting or skis. He built up what was probably the biggest personal business ever known in the insurance world, having organised a huge American connection. In the advertising world Mr. George Kettle, head of Dorland's, did much the same thing.

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"What shall we do to-day?" is your first thought on waking up here, or rather on being wakened up, for after your introduction to the "dark" life of St. Moritz the latter office will probably be necessary on the part of the hotel staff. Insist that they wake you by a personal entrance to your room, not by tinkling a telephone in the ear, a reprehensible habit with many Continental night porters unless previously warned.

Springing out of bed, what do you see? Snowy

mountains, bespattered with black pine-trees, the yellow-pink glow of the sun as it prepares to surmount its Alp and give you its warmth—and those black crows flying about outside the window. Were you a black crow in St. Moritz in the middle of winter would you not fly about in front of a window whence a kindly hand might emit a Swiss roll, or unconsumed portion of your *petit déjeuner*? Humanity in St. Moritz is divided into two classes—those who give their rolls to the crows, and those who don't.

Where you should be at this hour of the morning, of course, is on the Cresta Run. Not as an active runner, for unless you have already gone down from "Junction" you will not be allowed to go down from "The Top," which opened a few days ago. Nor is your name Captain "Jimmy" Coats, Mr. "Billie" Fiske, Captain Jack Mitford, Mr. Ralph Hawkes, Mr. Henry Martineau, Lord Northesk, or one of those other experts who know how to "ride the Run." Otherwise you are asking for a quick passage to Samaden, which is the local hospital. As a spectator you must be at "Battledore" before eleven-thirty a.m., for about that time the sun surmounts its Alp and starts to melt the ice on the Run, when it is immediately shut. On the first morning perhaps it is rather an effort to make such an early appearance.

As the sun appears over the mountains, the skaters start their movements on the rinks which are in front of the hotels; nothing is more graceful than the movement of an expert skater against such a lovely background of sun and snowy mountains. You can join the ski-ers, of course, in an early start and go 2,000 feet up the slopes of Corviglia in the railway to the club-house and ski

down to the bottom. The experts, such as the Duc de Sangro, Mr. "Bill" Clyde, Mr. Hamar Bagnall, and Mr. Leonard Govett, do it in about twelve minutes or less, complete their "ten Corviglias a day" with ease, and talk of their skis as "boards."

You may go and watch the curlers on their rink. These are rather serious, military-looking gentlemen, and do not appreciate it when a novice like Mr. Vivian Corneius rolls a better stone than they do, with their quarter of a century of curling conversation and lore behind them. And he calls as good a "Soop, soop" as any Scot at a bonspiel.

There is also riding round the racecourse, which is on the frozen lake, and other equine sports include ski-joring, and of course sleigh drives.

An early luncheon should be taken, for important afternoon events start at two o'clock, so as to get the best of the sunshine. At that hour every afternoon the bobsleigh run opens, and is presided over by Mr. Hubert Martineau: he runs it efficiently and quietly as he does his grouse-shoot at Marske and his cricket matches at Holyport. And the bobsleigh run admits of no fooling—it's not like going down a hill-side on a tea-tray. Mr. Martineau has been to St. Moritz for the past fifteen winters, and knows as much about the life there as anybody, with the exception of Mr. Hans Badrutt.

Never worry when you are at St. Moritz if you cannot ski or skate: after sundown you can have twelve hours of the life which so many of the visitors have only just left—cocktails, a very late dinner, dancing, and cabaret. Social climbers should always start with St. Moritz as their base: they are already 6,000 feet up, and much

nearer heaven than those who start at sea-level. You can see women who are sphinxes without any secrets at all, who are like peacocks in everything but beauty, as well as some of our lesser London hostesses who try to found salons and only succeed in opening restaurants for free-mealing Mayfairers.

You will not see here many of those charmingly hearty girls, with those cheerful and chubby faces that beam at you like pink moons. They go to the harder skiing resorts where corridors are silent after 11 p.m., and where there is nothing to do in the evenings except plan the next day's "run."

Douglas Fairbanks, they tell me, used to ski down to the station every night after dinner: he was rather nervous of his efforts being seen by daylight. Others also wait until it is getting dark, and, having walked at least a hundred yards up the main street of the town, ski in magnificent stately and slow time past the shops back to the security of the Palace Hotel and the ministrations of the barman.

The Engadine express carries many casualties on its homeward journey. There are walking wounded, stretcher cases and those who return sound in wind and limb but possibly bruised in their hearts, judging by some of the tender farewells you see on the station. Yet there are few broken hearts in this area: they are mostly sufficiently frozen before they get here.

Only yesterday morning my mind was full of generous thoughts: after breakfast I fed the crows outside my bedroom window. For I had not eaten my Swiss rolls, only blinked at them.

These friendly black crows give their name to the heights of Corviglia (derived from Latin *corvus*) and

haunt the Palace Hotel in the winter for the crumbs which fall: they retire to the cool of the trees in the mountains in the heat of the summer, and eat the caterpillars off the leaves. It is lovely here in the summer months; I am told the Alpine flowers are the best in Switzerland.

One remembers that before taking the express from Coire on departure there is the 4,000 feet descent in the mountain railway from St. Moritz. For those whose ears are badly affected by a quick descent this journey is not always pleasant: local knowledge has to be consulted. M. Badrutt, jun. (St. Moritz is ruled by Badrutts and Bons), once told me to get out at each stop and walk about, and keep the windows of the carriage well open—excellent advice, but, unfortunately, the train never stopped once on its descent. However, open windows and deep breathing saved the situation.

Even after only a day or two in St. Moritz one is sorry to leave faces which have become familiar so soon. In the hall of the hotel before departure, where M. Badrutt, sen., gives away a souvenir of your visit (exclusive of the bill), the call to the bar is already sounding, and about to answer it one sees Sir Keith and Lady Fraser, Sonia Lady Horlick, Mrs. John Moffat who with Mrs. Leonard Govett competes annually for the "sitting-up-late-at-night" championship, Conrad Veidt, Mr. Michael Farmer, Dr. Henri Dreyfus, and the platinum blonde.

The last-mentioned is a touchingly romantic figure who sits in the hall of the Palace Hotel most of the day with her expensive head on the broad shoulder of an expansive Swiss. He went away for a day recently: she cried and looked so sad during his absence, but on the

night of his return she was dancing a fandango on the platform as his train drew into the station.

Let this be but one moment of agitation. This movement, in the words of the analytical note-writers in concert programmes, must end calmly over a tonic pedal.

IN SEARCH OF SNOW

Second Year

PARIS, LEADING TO KITZBUHEL AND MUNICH

PARIS

February

THERE ARE two sorts of days in the winter months, those when you go out of the house wearing a coat and are eternally grateful for it, and those when you wish you had left the wretched thing at home. In Paris it has been as warm as in April, and the *chauffage central* has greeted one's entrance into hotels and restaurants like Ceylon's less spicy breezes.

The Paris telephone service still remains one of the seven wonders of the modern world. You dial or ask for a number for half an hour without the semblance of a reply: then suddenly the party concerned comes on the line and announces his presence at the number since dawn. And all the really important people (exclusive of the political and diplomatic world) seem to be away. For instance, "*Mademoiselle n'est pas en ville. Elle est partie pour les sports d'hiver,*" seems the general answer. The popular place for the French seems to be Superbagnères, above Luchon, on the edge of the Pyrenees, and Mègeve in Haute-Savoie. My own path lies once more towards Kitzbühel, in search of snippets of snow news.

Air-France have an early aeroplane to Paris in the winter (the journey only takes an hour and a quarter), and I am grateful to them on the outward flight for skimming just over the little Norman village of Blangy-sur-Bresle: on this river I fish during the summer with Mr. Arthur Impey, Mr. Reginald Fellowes, and Major Charles Anderson. Just at the moment when I was gazing at the river the exposed nerve of a back tooth

clamoured loudly: seeing that river reminded me of a fishing companion, Dr. Hally-Smith.

I had heard that he was a very famous dentist in Paris, but had always associated him with a fishing-rod rather than with forceps. And luckily I caught him the day before he sailed for a two-months' lecture tour in America. His opening remark: "Well, well—this isn't as good as sitting by a Normandy stream waiting for the mayfly to come up. We'll soon have you right," restored all my confidence, and put me in the right mood for the major operation to which I was about to submit myself, that of taking out a girl from a finishing school. Camels may have a job to get through the eyes of needles: equally difficult is the task for the average male of entering such an establishment. *Mademoiselle* is rightly suspicious, and you must pass a stern oral examination before taking her charges "round the town."

On this occasion my arrival at the massive iron gates of the *hôtel particulier* filled me with fear. Disapproving glances seemed to be framed in the windows, and a dog growled angrily as I approached the porch.

However, inside all was friendly. I found *Mademoiselle's* secretary most helpful, and after a slight dissertation on the works of Marcel Proust and his habit of always wearing long white gloves with evening clothes, and a hint that I was received almost *en famille* by most of the Faubourg-Saint-Germain, I sallied forth with my sub-débutante and her American girl-friend of equally virginal status to Montparnasse and the Gaston Baty Theatre. They perked up at the thought of seeing *Madame Bovary*, nor did this Gallic classic neglect to conduct us in each scene either to a bedroom or a couch.

Marguerite Jamois, who acted beautifully in the title

part (I drew special attention to the acting more than to the drama itself), was almost too lovely. One remembered that Flaubert's creation was a rather plump, friendly provincial ("*elle aimait les danses et les assemblées*"), whereas this heroine was slim, dark and mysterious-looking.

Previously we had dined at La Coupole, that huge café-restaurant where the artistic colony congregates. Large, rather odd dogs were led about by equally odd owners, giving a friendly air which was enhanced by the arrival of a nanny-goat. "Here is the true Paris," I pointed out with a *beau geste*, "not changed since Emile Zola's day, you know." I hope the girls believed they were seeing life: at that moment they were more interested in sinking a couple of gin and Dubonnets.

Strict orders to return my charges to store by midnight precluded our chance of going to the Bal Tabarin. So, instead, a visit to Maxim's and a *rencontre* with Count Armand de La Rochefoucauld was my programme. And Maxim's under the command of *Maitre d'hôtel* Albert is always amusing: they have installed air-conditioning therel Also there is "Landru," the long-bearded chauffeur, waiting to drive his favourite clients round in a new car. The old one featured among the famous relics at the International Exhibition.

It was a coincidence (and the need of a brandy cocktail for that errant tooth) which took me to 25, Avenue des Champs-Élysées, the Travellers' Club, as soon as I arrived here; in the aeroplane from Croydon I had been reading *Paiva*, by Alfred Schirokauer. Paiva, Queen of Love (at a price), was famous in the time of Napoleon III as Theresa Lachmann. She passed through a *cocotte's* chequed and chequered career which almost finished in a street fight in the gutter.

However, the millionaire German, Count Henckel von Donnersmarck, rescued her during the fracas, and opposite the spot where he had found her he built a magnificent house which is now the 'Travellers' Club. As his wife she ruled Parisian society until she died in the 'seventies: in the Club one can see many paintings of her on the walls and ceilings.

The ritual of a drink at the bar of the George V (always my base-camp in Paris) before catching the Arlberg-Orient express at the Gare de l'Est could not be missed. Half Paris goes there to tea, and the other half comes in for *l'heure du cocktail*, leaving about nine o'clock to "dine and go on somewhere after." The noise and chatter are terrific: the Parisian revels in it, and is miserable in a bar unless he is crushed and can have his feet trodden on all the time.

Watch every male head in the bar slowly swing round and follow Margaret Vyner as she walks in: this beautiful Australian film actress always attracts attention, even that of the lorgnette brigade. And there sits the Juno-esque Miss Rosemary O'Malley Keyes, resplendent in the crushed strawberry confection which was such a feature of Ascot last summer. She is always smiling and cheerful, and to-day more so than ever: her mother has just wired her good news from Biarritz.

Here, too, we find Captain R. L. Jolliffe, in a discussion over the question of gin. The burly captain, who well deserves his *petit-nom* "Jumbo," is one of the heads of Booth's Gin, a great lover of claret and classical music, and a director of Bertram's, the big caterers. He presides over the camp "sing-song" held by his catering staff on the Goodwood downs in the Sussex Fortnight, and wishes them all "Good

hunting" as they break camp for a week-end in Brighton.

And if Louis Bromfield and his family have come *en ville* for the day from Senlis, here will they be to meet their friends. The tall, athletic Bromfield is almost as good a skittles player and ski-er as he is author, of which he is one of the highest paid in the world. And what an expert he is with the frying-pan! His Sunday evening meals are famous from the neighbourhood of Senlis to the centre of Paris: duchesses of the Faubourg-Saint-Germain sit alongside the latest cabaret star from the Bagatelle.

But I can never go with him to what would have been an unforgettable meal, at the home of Edith Wharton, at her Pavillon Colombe (built by Louis XV for one of his ladies) at St. Brice, outside Paris: she died last autumn. Bromfield had promised to take me into that small, truly elegant literary coterie over which Edith Wharton presided: in former days it included Henry James and Paul Bourget.

I felt I should disturb their atmosphere of scholarly thought with my babblings and *potins* of Continental resorts. However, I was assured that they welcomed such glimpses of the outside world, to which they would add their criticisms with deft, humorous, almost impish strokes. They stole from life the best of art, music, and literature: they rendered little masterpieces in return. They lived in simple luxury with a supreme knowledge of comfort, food, and wine: since the early 'nineties the big world of turmoil has swept along, encircling yet scarcely touching their little island of tranquillity.

Time, save when it bore away one of their number, passed them by; their calm existence almost slowed it up. The Italians would describe it "*ritardando*."

KITZBÜHEL

February

PASSING THROUGH Innsbruck and looking out of the windows of the Arlberg-Orient express, I could see little except green fields, with an occasional snow-clad mountain; golf-clubs seemed more suitable items of luggage than skis and skates. And let me at once state that this year there seems a decided proclivity to pronouncing the "k" in "ski" very hard. Nearer to Kitzbühel there was more snow in the valleys, while snow-clouds were overhead ready to distribute their fleece at any minute. Snow is such an essential concomitant for these occasions. W. H. Berry used to sing: "Ah, what's a cat without whiskers?" and on similar lines I muse upon the snow question.

How pretty does the first snow-girl of the season look, if only in the distance! The effect is like the first cocktail before luncheon. That dark blue kit, touched up with splashes of red on socks and scarves, ameliorates even the fiercest of blondes. And within one hour of arriving at the Grand Hotel here, one emerges as a complete snow-boy (the word "snow-man," like "snow-ball," is absolutely forbidden in the best winter sports places) and "as delighted as a royal flamingo when he alights upon a cluster of lotuses."

It is upon no such flowery bed that I am destined to sit for the moment, but in that rickety chariot which somehow manages to be propelled along some wires up 4,000 feet of mountain to the top of the Hahnenkamm.

One can realise how oranges and bananas must feel when being embarked at a port. However, a warm welcome awaits one at the top, in M. Arturo Lopez's wonderful *Berghaus*. One can justly say "wonderful," for although the outside may be nothing much to look at, I will almost wager that this house commands as fine a view as any private house in Europe.

The inside is built of plain Austrian wood, while there is electric lighting, central heating, plenty of bathrooms, a sun-parlour, and a complete Tyrolean staff. The house had first to be built in the valley below, and was then taken up bit by bit and rebuilt on top of the mountain. Here there are big luncheon parties every day, and the expert ski-ers then go down the difficult runs into the valley below. The Lopez family have now built a second similar house in the valley. The position of the *Berghaus* rather knocks on the head night operations in the town, as the last funicular goes at about 7.30 p.m. and a "special" costs wads of *schillings*.

M. Arturo Lopez's cousin, Eugenio, is one of the finest ski-ers in the neighbourhood: for two seasons we have been wondering when he will announce his engagement to Miss "Bunny" Wynne, that lovely English girl with hair the colour of new cider. One might as well try to prove Laplace's equation in spherical harmonics as interpret the minds of modern young couples.

When ski-ing is finished for the day there is a general move for tea and dancing to two cafés, the *Reich* and the *Goldene Gams*, about fifty yards away from each other in the main (and almost only) street.

It was outside the *Reich* that I saw arriving the two figures of Mr. "Ruby" Holland Martin and Captain Robert Jenkinson, rather resembling drowned mice, but

with an air of conscious triumph which should more rightly have been on the face of their ski-instructor, Count Kari Lamberg. For, after only one week of his teaching, they had just negotiated the descent of the difficult *Streif* run in three hours, the record for this descent being three minutes. Out of fairness to the two performers, it must be related that this record was made without a luncheon interval.

Besides being a brilliant exponent of his art and a wonderful instructor, Count Kari Lamberg is quiet, good-looking, and very popular. One or two other instructors have at times been apt to boast about their social as well as their teaching successes. Two of his pupils are Princess Franz Weikersheim, a pretty girl and a pretty ski-er, and Mrs. William Aitken, also a pretty girl, but not yet such a pretty ski-er.

Mr. Holland Martin, who comes down the slopes as if he were carrying on his back most of the gold reserves of the Bank of England, of which he is a director, has, unfortunately, had to return with water on the knee. And he had just received the most encouraging letters upon his prowess from Mr. Montagu Norman.

Miss Lisa Maugham (as she was before she became Mrs. Vincent Paravicini) is always surrounded by handsome counts and barons, all as full of quarterings as of sex appeal; she is under the chaperonage of Mr. and Mrs. Antony Acton. That well-known pair of young Austrian *Grafen* "Hans and Pants" recruit members for Mittersill, the country club about eighteen miles away: Count Hans Czernin and Baron Hubert Pantz (to give them their full titles), with Prince E. J. Lopkowicz, are the working members of the club committee, which includes the Duke of Alba, Colonel Frederick Cripps, the Duc de

Gramont, Lady Mendl, Mr. Ivor Guest and the Duke of Sutherland.

The Club is *very* exclusive—quite correctly so, since in its previous existence it was a Bishop of Salzburg's Palace. It is 3,000 feet up, accommodating thirty guests, and if you have got enough quarterings to be invited, you will have a grand time. All sports are provided, including shooting (especially chamois, stag and roe-buck), fishing, ski-ing, swimming, tennis and riding. The executive committee will fix you up with the sterner sports, and in your absence will kindly take remaining wives, sisters, cousins and girl-friends for drives up the Grossglockner mountain-pass, so that they shall not pine away from loneliness.

* * * *

Prince Tassilo Fürstenberg has just arrived from Vienna. He is such a welcome visitor when he comes to England, too (in the language of women novelists, he is "tall, dark and handsome"), and is bound to cheer this place up. "Tassilo's here" will be the news in the "locals" this evening. He does big business with the letting of shootings and fishings to English and American parties in Austria and Hungary, he is always cheerful, whether wearing his national costume in the mountains or sitting in the sombre atmosphere of the Jockey Club in Vienna.

He has a charming, delightfully open nature, he never suffers from that "quartering complex" which obsesses some of the old European families who become frigid towards every other family (except English) which they consider has not enough quarterings on its coat of arms.

And the Fürstenberg family has a huge score in that respect.

I cannot think why some nice, pretty and rich girl has not married him. He is apt to champ his teeth in moments of excitement (though at heart it is only an intensified smile) and once in New York was said to have nipped a débutante in the neck. He wants to tell us his views of Vienna, so as he grinds his teeth in a friendly grin and begins, we may head this:

"The Vienna according to Tassilo."

"In Vienna, so to speak, there is now no social life, owing to the fact that the owners of the really big houses who used to entertain have their land in the states formerly belonging to Austria-Hungary, the dual monarchy. These states are now Czechoslovakia, Hungary, parts of Poland and parts of Yugoslavia, and the money restrictions of these countries are so severe that it is hardly possible to take out any money. Therefore the big houses are all shut.

"Contrary to London, Berlin, and Paris, where many of the big houses which are beautiful have been pulled down to make room for modern big apartment houses, Vienna, one-time capital of 48,000,000 people, has now been reduced to a capital of a nation of 6,000,000. Therefore she has not expanded as have her sister towns, so the big houses still exist. There are the Palaces of Prince Schwarzenberg, two palaces of Prince Liechtenstein, Prince Dietrichstein, Prince Schönburg, and Prince Kinsky, and the palaces of Counts Harrach, Clamm, Schönborn, and the two houses of Rothschild.

"Entertaining is practically only done by diplomats

and by a few people, who, owing to their marriages with foreigners (or other connections with money abroad), have the chance of giving parties. They are mostly given in hotels and are very scarce. Mostly several people get together and try to go to a play and then on to some of the night-clubs, and the bills are all split.

"One is often asked why the quality of women has decreased so much in Vienna. I believe the reason for it is that in pre-war times the girls recruited themselves from a population of 48,000,000 and every girl's dream was to get to Vienna, where it meant either stage, marriage or a *cocotte's* career. The Austro-Hungarian camps were situated all over the country and the young officers quickly discovered a pretty girl, who was then taken by the Colonel and from him to the General and so on to Vienna.

"But now all this has stopped; with the exception of a few girls, they have not got the looks of their predecessors. Nevertheless, the entertaining in the country estates still goes on and people make a point of doing their utmost to save money, so that they may be able to entertain their friends for a week's shooting. In Austria itself the actual shooting is not so very good and there are only a few places, such as Count Hugh Seilern's, Baron Tinti's, and Count Arco's, which have any good pheasant shoots. Mostly the old castles in Austria are inhabited by impoverished noblemen who give up their shooting but now and then join in the peasant shoots where twenty to thirty guns go out.

"Not only have the women decreased in beauty, but also the men in their keenness to pay court to women. But it still happens, now and then, that the old gallantry of pre-war days catches hold of a few of the men who

knew those times. Such as the other day I was out with Count Palffy, who married five times—his first wife being the Countess Esterhazy, the second Princess Radziwill (born Miss Dorothy Deacon), the third Mrs. Tree and the fourth Mrs. Ryan (born Countess Wurbarnd).

"We were out once with a foreign lady and she demanded a special new fox-trot from the musicians. Palffy was desperate, as he was so anxious to please her: he left the table and ten minutes later the leader and second violinist and saxophonist left. Later on I found Palffy and the other three sitting in a telephone booth. He had telephoned to a Berlin night-club and they were learning the fox-trot over the wire.

* * * *

Popular residents here in Kitzbühel include Mr. and Mrs. Leander McCormick: this name when coupled with International Harvester and Chicago all seems harmoniously familiar, though he himself was educated at Eton and Cambridge. As one of the local landlords the little boys stop in the street and take their hats off to "Herr Cormick," adding an appropriate Austrian greeting. He countered with the true Tyrolean reply, "*Grüss Gott.*"

Mr. McCormick is a very serious sportsman, and talks of his deeds slowly, intensely and at length. He recently wrote a book on fishing which would surely have been successful but for the fact that eight others on this subject came out in the same week. He keeps a meticulous diary, even to recording each shot in a round of golf, each cast in a day's fishing, and each step in a stalk for chamois.

He has sent me round a delightful photograph, from which I gather that he had found a dead, rather mangy-

looking wolf in the snow and was prodding it with a huge barge-pole. Re-examination might adjudge the animal to be a chamois, which it actually was. Prior to its decease one dawn at the hands of his merciful musket he had sat up all night in a wooden hut, softly chanting Moussorgsky's "Night on the Bare Mountains."

But I shall not be able to stay to hear it, for I must be off to Munich, passing the little frontier town of Kufstein, on the river Inn. Here is an organ over three hundred years old, which is enclosed on all sides except that the top covering is open when the organ plays. I am not sure whether it plays in the winter; during the rest of the year it can be heard twice a day, at twelve and eight. Motoring past on a summer's evening, the sound of this organ pealing across the valleys is most romantic.

MUNICH

February

"IF YOU EMPTY your plate it will be fine weather to-morrow." This Bavarian proverb makes me wonder why they ever have a wet day in Munich (*München* in German, *Monaco* in Italian), and when the *Oktober-Fest* is in full swing the autumn sun should never be invisible. Contentment is the motto of the *Münchener*; five regular meals a day (the extra one is a feast of white sausages in the beer-house at eleven a.m.) and a final couple of litres of beer before going to bed have for centuries contributed to these factors.

The city stands 1,500 feet above sea-level, giving one always a good appetite; work, except in the provision of enjoyment for each other, is a subject quite undiscussed. Politics would appreciate notice being taken of them, but everybody steps aside to make a right-of-way for beer.

The *Oktober-Fest* provides Bavaria with an official beer-drinking fortnight; it takes place in September (rather on the principle that may-flies come out in June), on the Theresa meadows outside the town, and externally is a mixture of the Royal Agricultural Show and Earl's Court.

One should go in a big party, the earlier in the evening the better. By six o'clock there is not a seat in any of the gigantic tents, all bearing the names of the breweries which have put them up. Stronger beer than usual is brewed for the occasion, and is drunk out of grey stone mugs, each holding a litre: before sitting down one goes to buy a chicken, roasted on open fires, or a spitted fish.

Bavarian bands blare out cheerful melodies, accompanied by much singing, shouting, and liltng in unison to the music. There is no dancing; a turn or two on the giant-racers, or riding two or three times on a bicycle round the open hippodrome, seems to give all the necessary encouragement for more beer-drinking. Closing-time for serving beer is ten p.m., for the side shows about an hour later, and then begins the return home.

This programme is carried out every day for a fortnight, and do not think that you need always stay in your own party. Anybody whom you happen to like the look of, or who happens to like the look of you (the latter, in my case, a rarer occasion), will meet you on friendly terms without formal introduction. You can be together lost in the crowd in three seconds.

Yet this festival is a mere picnic compared with the Carnival, in full swing here at the moment. During this time romance lurks in every corner of Munich; after it is over all the lovely girls mysteriously disappear back among their homes and their families, and are seen no more for a year. It is certainly something to have seen once in a lifetime. For real enjoyment of its more robust and exalted moments, when you may express a Dionysiac desire to dance like Mænads, a knowledge of the German language is most essential.

There are five or six balls each night in the big theatres, hotels, and beer-houses, and they vary from rather expensive, stiff, tail-coated functions, on the lines of one of our duller charity balls, to cheaper ones of a degree of hilarity which would be quite unknown in the West End. There seems to be only one rule—not to go to bed before it is daylight. Visitors come from all over Europe to spend a few days in Munich during *Fasching*, as it is

called, which ends with the first day of Lent and sees the demise of the Carnival Prince, Willy I, drowned in beer.

On evenings when I could lay aside thoughts of Corybantic cymbals and the carnival I enjoyed more soul-satisfying music at the Opera House. The great Dr. Richard Strauss himself conducted *Der Rosenkavalier*, and was off his desk the moment the curtain fell, hurrying to his game of bridge. The *Herr Doktor* is possibly the greatest living composer (Sibelius and Stravinsky enthusiasts, please contradict), but he is by no means a great conductor. Yet, like Elgar when his own works were being played, the orchestra give fine performances, seemingly peering into the composer's mind.

I doubt if much finer and nobler orchestral works have ever been written than Strauss's tone-poems, among which are *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Don Juan*, and *Tod und Verklärung*, all written when he was in his twenties: he is now over seventy. He gave the score of his first tone-poem *Macbeth* to our Royal Philharmonic Society when he was presented with their gold medal.

Germans sing Italian opera very well, rather surprisingly. They drag the *tempi* slightly, but the brass does not give one those reminiscences of the Bavarian band in the *Hofbrauhaus* (a couple of thousand Müncheners drink beer there each night) which it sometimes does in *Siegfried* or *Götterdämmerung*.

Hildagarde Ranczak's singing in *Salome* was most dramatic, her acting being better than any I have seen even in the stage play: she looked like a lovely playful wildcat in her calmer moments. When she showed her claws I am not surprised that anybody should bolt back again for safety to a cistern and put the lid on it. For

Salome (the accent is on the first syllable) was a primitive, sinuous creature, whom any reasonable man would describe as "a nasty piece of work." I thought she might even have accepted Herod's offer of his fifty white peacocks, if only to torture and eat them afterwards, feathers and all.

I find Richard Strauss's sweeping music, especially as interpreted by Clemens Kraus, the director of the opera, eminently suited to Oscar Wilde's ornate tragedy, and prefer his music in this form than when it is allied to comedy. Operatic libretti of comic intent breathe such a flavour of mid-European humour, heavy-handed and obvious. One excepts an Italian opera like *Gianni Schicchi*, a gem of cynical Florentine wit adorned by the music of Puccini.

* * * *

As a general rule German girls do not make the best of themselves. Their standard of feminine efficiency, if not of beauty, may be higher than that of our English girls, but they are restricted very severely over the question of "make-up."

Quite the most attractive girl whom I have met here is Baroness Maditt von Skrbensky, whose father is a prominent member of the German Jockey Club: she speaks excellent English, has the figure of an American or English girl, and is nearly always taken for such. Hence she is not nervous about the "make-up" question.

A kindly friend had appointed her my guide, an appointment which I most heartily endorsed, though it cannot have been so amusing for her to have trotted out a complete stranger to the *Deutsche* museum, beer-houses, *Fasching* and the Bavarian Alps and lakes with-

out once appearing bored with innumerable questions. We even listened to the *Glockenspiel* (chime of bells) which rings twice daily from the tower of the *Rathaus*. This is not a place where rodents are housed: it is the scene of mayoral and civic dignity; in other words, the Town Hall.

We visited Oberammergau, slumbering away peacefully in the Bavarian Alps until 1940, the next year of the Passion Play. A glimpse at Oberau on the return journey and its river, which I was assured was full of trout, and we came to the lake of Starnberg, whither Munich drives out the twenty miles most afternoons. All days seem as our Saturdays and Sundays to those lucky beings.

Passing Tutzing I was pointed out the summer residence of Countess Anna Montgelas, who takes "The Beehive" (as her young ladies' academy is termed) from Munich there during the hot weather. And I remembered that I was due for yet another duty visit, to invade this famous finishing school. I had promised Lady Patricia Douglas's mother, Lady Dunn (it was more or less a family affair), that I would inspect her daughter: the inspection, on the other hand, was of me by the Countess, who viewed me as a hawk among doves.

Encouraged by my reception in the Parisian *maison*, I called at the school on my return to Munich. The Countess does not encourage many male visitors, rather on the principle that men may become older but never become good: P. G. Wodehouse could not have worked his hero Wooster more quickly into a worse situation than I seemed to get myself. I certainly felt like a curate who has stumbled over a footstool at afternoon tea at the Vicarage, having essayed to mask my shyness in a cloak of funny stories. It was a cloak which soon let

in the deservedly chilly atmosphere. Lady Patricia took me for a walk in the garden, assuring me that all was well, for which deed I am eternally in her debt. (*Some of it was liquidated this year by the magnificent present which appeared under my name at her marriage to Count John de Bendor.*)

A short time ago, during the temporary absence of the Countess, some of the pupils held a Bavarian sing-song on the balcony. Volume of sound being of more importance than tone, the Müncheners collected in the street to cheer them to further efforts, so a student at the university told me. And I hope that on reading these lines those "old girls" who took part in it will stand duly corrected.

* * * *

One could write a chapter on the sausage life of Munich: I only wish I knew which ones to order, and always in a restaurant try to get a lead from one of the natives. *Weisswürste* are a great local feature; I slip into Franciscaner's at eleven a.m. and down two pairs, assisted by a light Löwenbrau. Remember to drink light beers in the big towns and dark beer in the villages; the light does not keep so well as the dark, and, naturally, the brewers' vans pay fewer visits to the village inns than to the town beer-houses.

Those white sausages (*Weisswürste*) are off the menu within an hour: either they are all eaten or they have gone flat, for they are as light and consequently just as digestible in character as a soufflé.

In the Schwarzwald restaurant besides feeding very cheaply on excellent food, you find there are fifty-one different sorts of open wines, Hocks and Moselles,

ranging from about fourpence to a shilling a large glass. In other words, you do not have to buy a whole bottle, which is a great saving.

My Munich billet will always be the Hotel *Vier Jahreszeiten* (the Four Seasons), owned by the brothers Alfred and Otto Walterspiel, who give their name to the famous restaurant which is attached to the hotel.

The way they cook the various fish which come out of the fast-flowing rivers in the vicinity is masterly; moreover, they never try to make you eat too much. And the liqueurs—*Himbeergeist* (made of raspberries), *Mirabelle*, *Quetsch*, *Kirsch* and (best of all) *Pfirsichgeist*, which the brothers make on their estate in the Black Forest—are surely worth the attention of our wine merchants. *Pfirsichgeist* is made from peaches and has a wonderful bouquet, especially if you ice a large brandy glass before pouring in the liqueur. And in about half a minute the peaches will come to life.

Brother Alfred is himself a masterly chef and a great friend of all "The Party." Herr Hitler often dines there with his tall A.D.C., Major Bruckner, a former Wimbledon star and of most cheerful personality. And on all occasions when the *Führer* entertains in his flat the food and wine are sent round from Walterspiels'. Of the Chiefs of "The Party," Ward Price (expert extraordinary upon European politics) has given such strikingly vivid characterisations in his *I know these Dictators* that I shall not attempt a minor effort.

You can get a good close-up of them at *thé-dansant* time in the *Vier Jahreszeiten*. The lounge, with the orchestra playing behind a palm bower, suddenly becomes animated and completely full of S.S. Guards. Two large black open Mercédès-Benz cars drive up, out march

"the Heads," pass smartly through the swing doors, sit down at a large table, drink tea, eat cakes and chat peacefully away, all the "extras" having meanwhile disappeared.

Hitler, Goebbels, von Ribbentrop, von Tschammer und Osten, Göring and Miss Unity Mitford I thought a good bag for one afternoon. Miss Mitford, whose pro-Nazi feelings are of the strongest, arrived after the others, gave them the proper salute, and then sat in another corner with some English friends, a wrapt expression on her face like Elsa waiting for Lohengrin.

As the Chiefs make a move to depart, the "extras" appear again with magical swiftness: within half a minute those black Mercédès-Benz are off again—and nobody ever knows in which direction.

PARIS

February

I SUPPOSE Mademoiselle eventually discovered that I took her two charges to the *Grand Guignol* on the afternoon following our visit to *Madame Bovary*. After all, it is one of the institutions of Paris, like the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre or the Sorbonne (and they had seen those), and this queer little theatre has been resuscitated under new management after a temporary demise.

Unfortunately, the former tenants have removed all those fearsome photographs and death-masks which used to hang in the foyer, also there is a new company.

All *Grand-Guignolers* will remember René Chemier, destined to death in every drama. I asked where he was, and they looked rather blank, saying, "*On dit qu'il est mort.*" Luckily they were very uncertain, and I hope it is not correct. The dramas ran true to form, with a hunchback being throttled by a doctor, vitriol-throwers as precise in their aim as dart experts, and an ape who killed old ladies at night: one must add that it was a relief that the farces were not up to their usual standard of French fun.

We had a grand luncheon party at the George V beforehand, even though Mr. Ian Akers-Douglas neglected to bring himself, his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Simpson, also to telephone his default. He is still owing me for those *Grand Guignol* "empties." At four o'clock one of my charges (the American girl, needless to say), with a voice attempting to emulate sirens at play, whispered:

"Do you mind if I go off now to see my doctor?" I pointed out that it was an odd hour and day (a Saturday) on which to make such an appointment, and asked why the doctor did not visit her at the finishing-school.

And I learnt afterwards the "doctor" had pointed patent-leather shoes, nice well-oiled hair, competed in the hand-kissing championship held annually in the Bois de Boulogne, and would be first on the floor when the *thé dansant* began at four-thirty.

At the Marignan Theatre was a French film the beauty of which induced the Marquis de Casa Maury to bring it at once to London to the Curzon Cinema. *Mayerling* recalls the tragedy of the Emperor Franz Joseph's son, Archduke Rudolph, and the lovely seventeen-year-old Austrian Baroness Marie Vetsera. It took place in 1889 at the royal hunting-lodge outside Vienna, and for years no reference was allowed to be made to it in Court circles or among the Austrian nobility.

Whenever I see deserted avenues of trees, with moss-covered gates and a weedy drive, and a shuttered *château* looking bare and lonely at the end of it, I think that its unhappiness may come from such a tragedy as happened at Mayerling.

Somebody has just asked me if I have not got tired of seeing so much snow in my wanderings: there was some slight hesitation before replying (only out of loyalty to the snow resorts), "I don't think so." Snow is very beautiful in the sunshine and in the moonlight, yet it conceals a wealth of beauty beneath its mantle: I am quite happy, instead, to see murky, rainy skies, and to return to owling about in the slushy dusk of a London evening.

But let this be no prelude to dreadful musings about the coming of spring, of green buds longing to burst into life, of lambs baa-ing, of wanderings with Wordsworth in primrose-clad woods. . . .

IN SEARCH OF SNOW

Third Year

PARIS, LEADING TO MURREN, WENGEN, SCHEIDEGG,
ZURICH, ST. MORITZ AND MILAN

PARIS

January

THE SCHEDULE ran up to form in the preliminary canter round Paris before the serious travelling to Switzerland and Italy began. After an argument with a friend at Croydon before leaving in the Imperial Airways machine I was able, as we crossed the French coast, to convince him that the aeroplane passed between Dieppe and Le Tréport, and to point out the stretch of the trout stream about which I write. I noticed that it looked just as cold as it does when I visit it in May.

This Parisian prelude varies very little. Scarcely is it as much a prelude as the tuning-up of the orchestra before the conductor arrives; instead of an orchestra, on this occasion the conductor is in charge of the *wagons-lits* compartments of the Oberland express.

Apart from the beauties of the snow-slopes and watching the beauties at the snow-sports, I shall on this tour have the chance to see one or two places new to me, such as Wengen, Mürren, and Scheidegg in the Bernese Oberland. Here I shall be in the Kandahar Club's best hunting-ground, the Melton Mowbray of Switzerland, and the sight of the golden badge "K" will make me turn my steps swiftly towards the Curling Rink.

For I gather that the general attitude of Kandahar members, which includes women, is not always tolerant to their less adept brothers and sisters of the ski-board, the girls especially becoming very "tip-nose" and haughty when qualified to wear the badge of the Club, which considers itself the Royal Yacht Squadron of

ski-ing. They tell me you will hardly get a dance unless you are a "K" man. Perhaps if you can prove that you are a "G" man as portrayed in American police films, you may get an odd word or two thrown at you.

Of course, St. Moritz is on the itinerary, after which a trip in the Mitropa Railway over the Bernina Pass to Tirano is the next move. The scenery is perfect, and the small-gauge train goes nice and quietly, slowing down occasionally almost to a standstill to allow a flock of Wyandottes (or perhaps they are Leghorns, as it is in Italy) to cross the road, on parts of which the railway runs.

Recall D. W. Freshfield's description in his *Italian Alps* of this descent from the mountains, where "the pines stand stiff in regimental ranks to resist the assaults of winter and rough weather. From the last brow overlooking the Val Tellina the eye rests on one of those wonderful landscapes which tell the Southward-bound traveller that he has reached his goal and is at last in Italy. The great barrier is crossed and the North is also behind us. The broad shining town of Sondrio, girt by towers and villas, wears, after the poor hamlets of the mountains, a stately air. . . ."

And so does the station-master with his imposing gold-peaked red cap and that impressive wave of arms which sends us off on our three-hour journey to Milan.

From this vantage-point I can get easily to Sestrières to the west, or Cortina d'Ampezzo to the north-east. However, fond as I am of seeing these various snow resorts, I am unable to take part in the sterner snow-sports, due to the fact that a flying piece of iron proved harder than the flesh and bone of a leg, on a visit to France some twenty years ago.

Therefore Milan itself lets me combine both duty and

pleasure, for it is the home of the Teatro alla Scala, and I intend my visit to coincide with Gigli's opening performance in Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*. Moreover, I am much honoured at the thought of escorting to it Mr. Somerset Maugham on his first visit to the famous opera house.

My arrival at the Hôtel George V, after due greeting from the manager, M. Blouet, luckily coincided with that of Sir Percy and Lady Simmons: I say "luckily" because they were the quicker on the draw about the suggestion of an *apéritif*. As a director of the Philip Hill Company, apart from his business as a distinguished City lawyer, Sir Percy was, of course, in a strong position to cope with such a suggestion.

Just coming in for luncheon to the hotel was that fine old "*grand-sportsman*," M. Edmond Veil-Picard, one of the richest men in France and the proprietor of Pernod. He is well over eighty (and looks about fifty), has travelled all over the world, lived in various capitals, yet for the past twenty years has not left Paris for a night. In a long life he has found that it is the only city in the world for him.

The two brothers Veil-Picard, Artur and Edmond, are among the most important race-horse owners in France. They also possess probably the most notable collection of eighteenth-century French art, keeping a large house in the Rue des Courcelles entirely as a museum.

They spent their early years in Besançon, to which town their father was a great benefactor. And Edmond, instead of doing his military service in the army, was attached for four years to the Besançon *pompiers*, in which he rose to the rank of lieutenant.

At last, one day, there actually was a fire in Besançon,

which the *pompier*s, headed by their lieutenant, extinguished very quickly, and prepared to depart. Suddenly from a smoking window a figure was seen, waving violently. Up went the ladder again, and up it went Edmond.

He got into the room and found it was a very large young woman whom he had to rescue: he himself is very small, though strong and wiry. Hoisting the woman on his shoulders, amid the encouraging cheers of the spectators, he started to descend the ladder.

There is a sad ending, for the ladder broke, and the unfortunate woman, being the heavier of the two, hit the ground first and was killed. M. Veil-Picard fell on top of her, was luckily uninjured, and for his gallantry in the whole affair was decorated with the Legion of Honour.

* * * *

Because one is in Paris that is no reason to eat at least twice the amount of food one would take in London; at Maxim's I must have eaten the total output of frogs for the day for that restaurant, and returned to the George V's hotel coiffeur for a course of rejuvenation.

From an adjoining room there emanated the sound of songs such as Leslie Henson and company sing in their more jovial scenes on the stage; there were solos, choruses, *ballades sentimentales*, barrack-room ballads, and all other vocal noises inseparable from the aftermath of a feast. The participants were the agents for a mineral water, and it scarcely seemed that they were partaking of their own wares, though later in the afternoon I felt sure they would be cracking a bottle or two.

The next move was to the Travellers' Club to write

some letters which I had neglected before leaving London; the Club's notepaper looks so distinguished. But all that happened was a gentle snooze, while from an inner room, seemingly miles away, came a quiet "Check" from Major Charles Anderson, and "*Un sans-atout*" from a neighbouring bridge-table. They are good bridge-players in the Travellers' Club, of about the same standard as at the St. James's in London.

It was evidently a gala night (at least the prices were put up when I telephoned for seats) at the Opéra-Comique, with Delibes' *Lakmé*. I wish they would give this opera at Covent Garden; it has a fine setting, with red-coated British officers (Indian Mutiny days) wandering about in tropical foliage, a dusky maiden, an angry Brahmin father, and most pleasant music. The tenor part is excellent, one which John McCormack used to sing in his operatic days; Louis Arnoult sang it very well, and, in fact, the whole production was of a high standard. A special night at the Opéra-Comique (Thursdays usually) is always worth a visit; some of the ordinary nights are a bit sketchy, and this applies also to the Opéra.

The rôle of *Lakmé* was designed and composed by Delibes for the delightful American singer, Marie Van Zandt, who for five or six years was the spoilt darling of the Opéra-Comique. It was produced in 1883, and a contemporary writes of her that she was so fascinating and graceful in the part that he went to hear her three times in a week.

Smoking during the intervals invariably gives the gendarmes their day's delight. You are at once herded into a room about the size of a railway compartment, though you can study there a bust of Benjamin Godard, and can also get a drink. Even distinguished-looking

Frenchmen (evening dress, bowler hats, beards, and Légion d'Honneur) receive the same treatment. Then the bell rings for the next act, and scores of voices urge you to take your seat in the same peremptory tone as you hear at casinos: "*Les ieux sont marqués: faites vos jeux.*"

MÜRREN, BERNESE OBERLAND

January

THE SUN is popping his head over the top of the Jungfrau, and in about ten minutes the whole of the Lauterbrunnen Valley, on one side of which lies Mürren and on the other Wengen and Scheidegg, will be bathed in the sunshine which has graced the Oberland all this winter. The weather has been acknowledged as perfect, whereas last year it was the worst since 1847, the year of the Swiss War of Secession (no casualties on either side).

It is ten o'clock in the morning, and I am very late; I put my nose round my door at nine a.m. and saw all the good patrons of the Palace Hotel scurrying down to their breakfast. For they had gone to bed early overnight, a prey to no nocturnal distractions at such haunts as call themselves *Chez Vous, Moi, or Elle*. People come here to ski, to skate, and to curl. One can sit up all night long in London; it is not necessary to come to Switzerland for that purpose.

The ice is in good condition; and the snow, after a recent fall, is just as when Good King Wenceslas looked out, deep and crisp and even; I wish he would look out of his window and sight me, gathering my winter fuel. He could then send as his pages to bring me in any of the five Scottish lassies who are here—Miss Adele Walker, just elected to the Kandahar Club; Miss Bridget Robertson, for whom I prophesy swift membership; Miss Marjorie Tulloch, who, though very young, is on

the right road to becoming a member; Miss Diane Knox, or Miss Virginia Watson—and I should be quite happy.

There is no need to be lonely in Mürren: at once if you show such symptoms somebody will take charge of you to ski, curl, or skate. The skating is in the hands of Captain Duff-Taylor, whose Eskimo-Indian leather coat aroused my envy almost as much as his prowess on the ice.

On the day of my arrival Lord Lytton, president of the Kandahar Ski Club, was judging the competitors for his skating cup, and one admired the good manners of little Miss Agnes Lee-Roberts, who, when commiserated with upon her defeat by Miss Pamela Stephany, at once said that she was beaten by a much better skater; and the winner was equally modest about her success.

On the curling rink you are in the capable hands of Mr. "Paddy" Shaw-Stewart, but there is no place for beginners to-day, it being the dawn of the Test match, Mürren versus Wengen. At bridge on the previous evening, my partner, Mr. Burt-Brill, a Brighton magistrate and an ace-curler, retired to bed sharp at eleven p.m., for he is a "skip" of one of the Mürren "rinks" (technical name for a team of four). I did not blame him, for we were holding horrible cards against two expert players, M. Vittorio Strigari, Secretary to the Italian Embassy in Paris, and Comtesse Nitzy de Fontaines, straight from the Faubourg-Saint-Germain. Moreover, you have to be very fit for curling, and this event, the Wright Cup (given by Sir Bernard Wright), is listed as a "blood" match.

Very early in the morning, outside my window, I had heard strange outlandish noises, and realised they signified the arrival of the Wengen team, just emerged from

its lair complete with glengarries, brooms, curling-stones in baskets, wives and girl-friends. All the morning from the rink came sounds as of Arsenal playing Sunderland, and during the luncheon interval, although Mürren were already well in the soup, they joined lustily in "The Blue Bells of Scotland," played rather *ad libitum* by the hotel band.

By the evening, however, Wengen's margin of victory was not very large, and all the visitors returned home happy. As a Scottish voice remarked (and three-quarters of the players were Scots): "On the ice all men are equal, except that some play better than others." They say you have to be all-Scotch and half-tipsy to be able to curl, which is sheer nonsense, for it is a game of intense skill. On the other hand, to speak the curler's toast needs a modicum of alcohol.

I am sure the game of "Happy Families" originated here. The Mürren-esque mood is like that of our fashionable seaside hotels in the summer holidays, with a good dash of the Berkeley. Quite ninety per cent of the visitors are British, and, as on a cruise, you are looked after. But you *must* behave yourself, else, quite rightly, Mürren hopes you will go somewhere else. Lady Mabel Lunn sets the pace of the place, and she herself owns that she prefers it to be moderate: it is no less enjoyable for that reason.

Her husband, Mr. Arnold Lunn, is the quiet, dominating figure behind the life of the Bernese Oberland. He is a fine writer, a deep thinker, a helpful student of the younger generation, and is the acknowledged high priest of ski-ing. He is vice-president and one of the founders of the Kandahar Club, about which I am not now so scared as when I mentioned it before.

The Kandahar Club corresponds in many respects to the Free Foresters Cricket Club with regard to its method of electing candidates. From one of its original members I quote the following:—

“The great point to remember is the admirable system of election, by which we have been able to exclude all undesirables and include just the right people. In other words, it is not sufficient that he should be a good ski-er, nor is it sufficient that he should be a good chap. He must be an admixture of the two, with the emphasis on the words ‘good chap.’ Only by keeping rigidly to this common-sense system have we been able to make the club quite the most important influence in national and international ski-ing.”

The Duke of Kent is patron and Lord Lytton the president of the Club, which has over six hundred members, both men and women, many of them from various nations.

The greatest and oldest of all downhill races, the Roberts of Kandahar, gave the Club its name. Lord Roberts was not the first president, for the Club was founded in Mürren in 1924: Major L. L. B. Angas held that office, Mr. Bedford Russell was vice-president, and another of the pioneers was Mr. A. H. D’Egville (“Deggers,” of cartoon fame). It was he who selected the badge: a simple K. And if you can wear a gold K on your ski-ing jacket, you are in the small select band of super-experts at the sport.

Among the women who are gold Ks are Miss Audrey Sale-Barker, Miss Boughton-Leigh, Mrs. Lois Butler, Miss Evelyn Pinching, Miss Doreen Elliott, and Lady Mable Lunn, whose son, Mr. Peter Lunn, has an *alpha* in addition to his gold K: it is rather like a bar to a medal.

"*Sicut sagitta sagittante*" is the Club's motto, which may be useful to Violet Trefusis in her next novel. For, like Theodora Benson, she is very partial to the appearance of many quotations and foreign languages in her books. Most of them are *à la française*, though occasionally we get a *preciosa*, as we are informed they say in Spain. There must be a certain *je ne sais quoi* about being able to say to a waiter, "*Garçon, l'addition,*" as well as very satisfactory to make your characters murmur your pet French aphorisms.

I have followed the day in its many diversions, even to rescuing beauty in distress on skis in the person of Mrs. Rex Chalmers. A couple of pre-luncheon *Glabweine* put us in good heart to attack the running buffet, which is a feature of the Palace Hotel's midday meal.

The sun is disappearing behind the Breithorn; I must be quick else I shall be late for my game of bridge at five o'clock with Lady Mabel Lunn. Remember the curlers' ode:

"Attend to the game without slackness,
No loafing about on the brink,
Be deaf to the charms and distractions
That sport on the neighbouring rink."

Mettons que je n'ai rien dit, and my apologies to Violet Trefusis.

WENGEN, FOR SCHEIDEGG, BERNESE OBERLAND

January

ALREADY HAVE YOU been introduced to Wengen when its doughty representatives arrived for the great curling match at Mürren. Distances are deceptive in Switzerland: places seem close to each other on the map, yet to change your locality it is nearly always necessary to descend one mountain and go up another.

To change from Mürren to Wengen you must follow this process; from Wengen you can actually continue your 2,000-foot ascent to Scheidegg without altering your mode of transport. In any case, it has to be the railway, for there are no roads up to any of these places.

In the summer you can walk; Mendelssohn (probably whistling a song or two without words) strode gallantly over the Wengen Alp one June a hundred years ago, and wrote a description worthy of the greatest letter-writers.

Wengen is a nice place, if not quite as nice as Mürren. The atmosphere is similar to Mürren (big seaside hotel with a dash of the Berkeley), except that at Wengen one misses that dash of the Berkeley. You rather feel, after tea, that the books on the laps in the lounge will drop sharply to the floor in surprise should you deviate from the Wengen-ite outlook.

Certainly, books went down and lorgnettes went up when, on my arrival, and feeling rather lonely, a lovely Swedish blonde, obviously the belle of the place, put both arms round my neck and warmly embraced me:

they were not to realise that I had known her since she was about twelve.

Most of the other girls I saw at Wengen had that sisterly look about them—everybody's pal—a jolly good sort. "Nothing doing: I'm not that type of girl" would be the retort to the playboy over the evening's only martini, if you could ever manage to get her alone in a corner of the bar. She is waiting for "Mr. Right" to come along, determined, at all costs, until that supreme moment arrives, to maintain the original tradition of the honeymoon.

How lovely is the Lauterbrunnen Valley at night, as seen from Wengen. A faint purple aura tops the mountain peaks, whose white crowns of snow are freezing in eternal isolation. The tall, black pine-trees stand like sentinels guarding the approaches to their lords and masters: in a world of white silence lie the distant little Alpine villages, twinkling as if in the sky like nests of stars.

From a neighbouring hotel float little ripples of laughter—*very* late for Wengen, which goes to bed earlier even than Mürren, except on such occasions as the Apache and Vagabond Ball, for which, unfortunately, I could not stay.

The purity of the atmosphere is delicious, though it should not strike one quite like it did a girl who emerged from the Four Hundred in the small hours of the morning, and stood with her companion in Leicester Square waiting for a taxi. As she sniffed rather haughtily she remarked, "What's that peculiar smell?" "Oh, that's only fresh air, my dear," was the reply.

Rather should one feel as did the Abbé Marignan in Maupassant's *Clair de Lune*, that God perhaps had made

such nights as this to clothe with His ideals the loves of men.

On we go to Scheidegg next day; here (and one must couple with it Klosters in the Engadine) is the best ski centre in the whole of Switzerland. There is just one hotel, and it is always full. It is a very good hotel, about 7,000 feet up, and you can rarely get a room for Easter, when the weather is warm enough to ski in bathing costumes. Truly, one may call this the Café de Paris of the Bernese Oberland.

"This is the spot for the beauties," as Harry Tate says in his sketch "Fishing" when he has moored his punt in the best swim. If you looked at Lady Jean McIntosh's party which it varies in numbers between thirty and fifty, you might imagine that somebody was giving a birthday party at the Savoy.

With her sister, Lady Margaret Drummond-Hay, she watches over a large "juvenile division," and keeps them all bright, happy, and good-tempered. For when the *Föhn* is blowing, which it elected to do one morning recently, unless you are the hardiest type of ski-er you remained "confined to barracks" for the day: and this wind is said to make you very bad-tempered.

However, I saw no ill effects, and as for hardy ski-ers, Mr. Christopher McIntosh proceeded to break a bone in his wrist in a race, and was out ski-ing again on the same afternoon. Just because you are a member of the Kandahar Club it does not mean that you do not have falls; even the best cricketers get out, and the finest dry-fly fishermen flick off flies.

The biggest Swiss film company is making a film, *Die kleine Scheidegg*: we have a lovely German actress, Suzanna Biberti, and no lack of amateur talent as

"extras." In addition, to a bevy of beauty all in the McIntosh party, which includes the Misses Audrey Sale-Barker (one of the greatest ski heroines of all time), Frances Ronalds, Vivienne Dauntesy, Barbara Denison-Pender, and Auria Weldon, we have Miss Nancy Harmood-Banner, the crooning ex-débutante, and Mr. Dennis Bradley to advise on any sartorial effects. I note that he is actually conservative in his own ski-ing outfit. We have also M. Giovanni Stagni, described elsewhere as "one of Europe's premier playboys," though he is equally at home on skis as on the dance-floor of any *Ambassadeurs* restaurant.

Even I took a part (a speaking one, too) in the film being informed by the director that I was to take my party away from the supper table "in the grand English manner." Mr. and Mrs. Somerset Maxwell were both kind enough to congratulate me upon the performance, and, according to the director, I have every chance of becoming the Herbert Marshall of Swiss films.

Early next morning I saw such a lovely girl going off on a ski-run. She looked like a pretty windmill whose sails turned and flew round and round, fretting the blue sky with a delicious shiver of joy. She had the brain of a bird.

ZÜRICH

February

THOSE WHO ATTACH importance to omens may care to note the tale of the Alpine monk.

From Scheidegg you can look across at what is seemingly a recumbent monk on the mountain-top. Peacefully he lies there, as if carved out of rock; below his chin the sky is visible beyond, but there are times when the snow fills up the gap, giving the monk a large double chin.

Should this happen, it is said that a European war is imminent. During the years 1913 and 1914 the defile was full: never has it been so empty of snow as it is to-day.

I have spent the last day or two in the Swiss Lake District: you can make no move into the Bernese Oberland without halting at Interlaken with its many delightful hotels, two of which, the Lac and the Carlton, are owned by M. Hofmann, who must be known to thousands of travellers passing through Switzerland. And his daughter, Miss Hofmann, manages the Palace Hotel at Mürren in winter and the Carlton at Interlaken in the summer—a most efficient and handsome girl.

The *Föhn* was still blowing when I left Scheidegg: some lovely snow has come since then. Should you be snowbound in that area, they search for you with Eskimo dogs, guides, and *Kirsch*: in other parts of the country it is a case of St. Bernards, monks, and Benedictine: many a gourmet has chosen his snowy area for such considerations alone.

Of the beauties of the Alps or the loveliness of the

moon in her chariot of pearl, I must talk no more, else I shall only howl with sentiment and blot this page with a blur of romantic tears.

This same unkind *Föhn* prevented me from going up on the railway to Jungfrauoch, which is over 11,000 feet up. It is the highest railway point in Europe, and I should imagine the highest hotel stands there, too. From it on a clear day you can see the Black Forest in Germany, the Vosges mountains in France, and right down almost to the Italian lakes. The height may make your head sing considerably, but by continual swallowing and careful breathing one can eliminate much of such unpleasantness.

If you are an expert skier you can go down from there about twenty-five miles along the great Aletsch Glacier to Brigue. You must guard against avalanches, especially when this miserable *Föhn* blows. It is warm, causes the snow to break up, and is remarkably dangerous.

The railway from Interlaken to Zürich passes through the capital of the country, Berne, a town more often seen by visitors from the inside of the railway station than from the outside. It is a fine city of the university type, I should say rather like Heidelberg in character, a town with which I am well conversant, having motored through it once, whereas I have only been through Berne in the train.

This tour might be named, in terms of the great Liszt: "*Années de Pèlerinage—troisième année—Italie et Suisse*"; it is perhaps a coincidence that I am following the exact route which he took about eighty years ago. Liszt stayed at the famous Baur-au-Lac Hotel in Zürich, and went on, as I shall presently, by the Lake of Wallenstadt gradually down to Milan. I do not expect that he stopped at St. Moritz; one could hardly imagine

him and the Comtesse d'Agoult in the Palace Bar.

The Baur-au-Lac at Zürich is, as its name denotes, on the edge of the lake, and there is another very fine hotel with lovely grounds and golf-course, swimming pool, and skating rink on the hill outside the town: the Dolder Grand. M. Primus Bon advised me to go up and see this hotel. Anything to do with hotels which any of the five Bon brothers recommend you to do will never lead you wrong.

Here was an old friend, Prince Ernst Ratibor, formerly a Lieutenant of Submarines in the German Navy. Very good-looking as a young man (he is balder now) and speaking perfect English, he vastly amused the crew of British sailors who rescued him in a long-boat after being torpedoed and having a lengthy bathe in the North Sea.

At Donington he was very popular with the guards, and being in need of female solace made a little arrangement with an N.C.O. for financial consideration. I regret to say the N.C.O. pinched both the money and the girl—the only grudge Prince Ernst has ever felt against an Englishman.

London's greater railway termini should take a lesson in buffet management from that run by M. Primus Bon at Zürich. Not only is it a station buffet, catering for 2,000 meals a day (Zürich is the Clapham Junction of Europe), but all the big business people of the town use the upstairs restaurant as Londoners use the Savoy Grill. Mr. Brian Franks worked there as well as in Berlin at the Esplanade Hotel before taking up the management of the Mayfair Hotel. Both he and Mr. David Rhys, now head of a chain of commercial hotels, have proved that it is possible for products of Eton to get to the top of the hotel as well as other less mundane trees.

Zürich is one of the richest cities in Europe. The vaults of the Swiss Bank must certainly hold many great European secrets. (Ask a prominent North Country M.P.) It is also a very correct city in its behaviour: there is no restaurant night-life after the concerts, opera, theatres, and cinemas have closed: lights are put out at midnight, which is over one hour later than at Berne.

However, there is plenty of party life in the big private houses which abound all along the lakes: entertaining is on a very bright scale, I gather, and you have to spend some time in the place before you know the ropes. There are certain extension nights in some of the restaurants, but for a stranger they are remarkably difficult to find—they are not always so easy in London, either, for strangers. In and around the university there are 45,000 students, who do not all go to bed at eleven o'clock; meet some of them, and you will have plenty of extension nights.

Having just been telephoning a friend at St. Moritz, I have already some advance gleanings of the Ritz of Switzerland. (Americans especially always accentuate the last syllable in St. Moritz.) The principal news is that Mrs. Charles Cartwright has just given a huge party with a Tyrolean band imported from Kitzbühel. And "Auntie B" (not all may call her "Beatrice") gives grand parties, in which there is nearly always an "incident" to amuse the guests who are not concerned in it themselves.

I asked if certain regulars were there, and on enquiry about that charmingly naïve, unspoilt little American girl, Miss Chico Kilvert, who used to "rough it" round the luxury resorts of Europe, I heard that she was married in America; her husband, Mr. Duncan Armstrong-Taylor, is Mrs. (Laura) Corrigan's nephew.

ST. MORITZ

February

MANY PEOPLE come here with one increasing purpose—annually to improve the position of their table in the Palace Bar. These folks are not liable to see a small band of men who come here annually to improve their position in the Cresta Grand National.

Bar-boys and their friends do not face much of the morning sun at St. Moritz. By the time they are putting down their morning refresher with a pleasant luncheon in view, and perhaps planning a sleigh drive for the afternoon (they must be back early, else somebody may take their table in the bar), the Cresta Run is shut for the day. The sun has started to melt the ice by eleven-thirty a.m. At the moment it is not so much the indoor as the outdoor life which we will survey. With regard to skiing, this place does not yet cater for the “tiger”; there are the famous slopes of Corviglia, of course, but these are not satisfying enough to the expert.

It is enough, though, for that stern, middle-aged section of women, with expressions like battle-axes, whose looks alone could decapitate you. Haversacks full of chocolate and the unexpended portion of the day's rations are slung round costumes which look as if they had been designed in a rage and put on in a tempest.

Colonel Hans Bon has helped considerably with his ski-lift at Suvretta House; it seems that the local authorities, too, will have to try to develop, by means of lifts and funiculars, the area round Silvaplana and Surlej; otherwise,

as the crowds increase, as they have done in a good year as this, the good skiers will be looking for other grounds.

Except in St. Moritz, where Mr. Hubert Martineau (he is now the president of the Club) so efficiently watches the interests of the bobsleigh run, I fear that bobsleighbing is rather on the decline. The younger generation who care for a hardy sport, allied with dash, danger, and skill, prefer to take a solo chance on the Cresta Run, unique of its kind in the world.

Those who lounge lazily through the Riviera summer season and at other times of the year are content to crawl around casinos, yet somehow managing to elicit admiration for their purposeless existence, would turn away in disgust from the Cresta Run at nine-thirty o'clock on a freezing morning, just remarking: "What a he-man's game!" Yet most of us breathe a prayer of thanks to realise that there are still many of our men who care to live dangerously.

Imagine that you are in the conning-tower in the secretary's room at the top of the observation post, from which every part of the course can be seen.

Colonel C. L. Hodgson talks into the microphone for the benefit of the spectators all along the course. "The first rider this morning in the Italian Cup is that brilliant young Swiss, Fischbacher." The telephone buzzes, all is ready at the start, all is ready at the bottom.

The old Italian, Benzoni, who has built up the Run each year since its beginning in 1885, lowers a sign outside the hut, the secretary clangs a mournful tone on a huge bell, the starter lifts the gate at the top, and the competitor throws himself on to his "skeleton" toboggan.

As he breaks the line Colonel Hodgson starts the electric chronograph which registers tenths of seconds

with absolute precision. Cups are won—and lost—by such tiny margins.

“He is all right at Church Leap—took Battledore nicely—turned rather late at Shuttlecock—is going well in the straight—about 59.2, I think.” So talks an expert as the competitor negotiates the various points of the course, and then the clock clicks as the tape is broken at the finish. “59.6 seconds,” reads the Colonel. “Please check it.” Fischbacher has completed the course at an average of about forty-six miles per hour (on the fastest portion of the Run attaining nearly eighty m.p.h.) with his head about two feet off the ice.

It is a severe test of nerves for the competitors to sit at the top of the Run, waiting for their call. There is the person to whom every novice is eternally grateful—Captain J. S. Coats. This magnificent rider has always a word of encouragement at the psychological moment. They tell me that the first time you go “from the top” (the full course) the clang of that bell sounds like a funeral note.

Certainly no more popular rider has ever been down the Cresta Run than “Jimmy” Coats. No wonder there was loud cheering with much congratulation in the Kulm Hotel when the cup was presented to him for winning his fifth Grand National. It is a very big achievement for a man in his middle forties to defeat many competitors of half his age in a test such as is involved on the Cresta. One big reason for his success is that he blends science with courage; he studies all the conditions with the precision of a mathematician.

“To ride well is not simple. It takes time and study. There is no short cut. All attempts at this lead to the hospital,” reads the annual report of the Cresta Run.

And there are many whose hearts are in their mouths every time Mr. Jim Lawrence goes down, for he is almost too brave and has so many falls: he is one of the boldest riders ever seen in the Run. One for whom a big future is prophesied is Mr. Eric Rylands, who had the Italian Cup in his pocket and threw it over the edge of Shuttlecock. But Cresta riders never grumble if they are beaten.

Mr. Rylands is not only a brave man on the Cresta Run. Once on a long vacation from Cambridge he took the job of courier to fourteen American girls on a trip round Europe. "Put away that baby stuff; try some proper liquor," they told him when he ordered champagne cocktails. And they put away enough gin to encourage him to start a juniper shrubbery and sell the proceeds to Mr. Henry Horne for Seager Evans's distilleries. For I note a great deal of their gin is drunk on the Continent.

In one night-club Mr. Rylands walked in with his flock, temporarily their sole escort. In half an hour he was sitting at his table drinking alone: all his charges had provided themselves with dancing partners in that time. The departure from Rome railway station was like a battle of flowers; not a soul did they know on their arrival four days previously, but fourteen young American girls in an Italian city soon recruit its manhood.

The air of St. Moritz is conducive to gaiety; the slightest amount of alcoholic refreshment, when taken at a height of 5,000 feet, is apt to cause light-headedness. Luckily the control of one's behaviour is a prerogative of the Britisher. However, exceptions are unfortunately found, and it is gratifying to know that some disciplinary action has been taken to prevent the possible recurrence

of hooliganism at a winter resort which has everything of the most pleasant to offer to its guests.

M. Hans Badrutt, the owner of the Palace Hotel, of which the bar has been a setting at times of more than hilarity, has recently taken out his weed-killer with excellent results, so that the flowers may breathe an air of happiness instead of apprehension. It is not amusing to think that at a gala night a roll of bread may be thrown at you and splinter the glasses on your table.

Also it is considered to be the worst taste for a young man to arrive in the middle of a big private dinner party in ski-ing clothes and to sprawl over the table in front of his hostess, a kind, generous person, who naturally did not feel in the position to remonstrate.

Mr. Hubert Martineau, who has seen the last sixteen seasons of Palace Hotel life, though he deplores anything that creates a bad impression of the Englishman in the Alps, is of the reasonable opinion that it is part of the annual curriculum to include a certain amount of noise and gaiety. Others, not so tolerant, sit in the hall and sniff down their noses at any sound above a whisper. That is equally unreasonable, yet "to deprive elderly people of their bogies is as brutal as snatching from babies their big stuffed bears."

Never worry in these Continental resorts if you do not possess a title. Nearly everybody else has got one, so you remain in a distinguished minority. For on the Continent all the sons of all the counts call themselves counts, and it would need an expert in permutations and combinations to discover the possible grand total in Europe, exclusive of Spain and Soviet Russia. In any case, many of them can be counted out altogether. Still, you can learn a lot from them with regard to pretty

speeches, and some of them look grand in their snow-kit at the *thés dansants*.

This year I stayed at the Carlton Hotel, which has the highest situation in the town. There the sun appears over the Alps one hour earlier than for the people in the houses below, and stays for an extra hour in the evening.

*“Au sommet de ces monts couronnés de bois sombres,
Le crépuscule encore jette un dernier rayon.”*

Life is pleasant and happy at this hotel, and for gaiety you can chalk up your nightly appearance in the Palace Bar and receive your welcoming cocktail from Mr. “Billy” Reardon on the table to the left as you go in. At the next table you will see Mr. Louis Bromfield, the American author, who skis like an expert all the day, entertains his friends all the evening, and at some time or other in the twenty-four hours must write like an expert.

Sir John Maffey, almost pinioned by some of the juvenile division as they escort him to the bar, looks a Triton among minnows and listens with an air of polite gravity to their confidences. You will see him make an equally polite escape after a few minutes. M. Badrutt discourses about his Chesa Veglia restaurant, which is full for every meal, and offers to take you to see his picture of the “Sixtine Madonna.” He tells you its story: afterwards you wonder with him, “Is it the original?”

At Suvretta House you move into almost a Grosvenor Square atmosphere. Colonel Hans Bon runs everything perfectly and there are gay nights in the bar, but if the temperature looks like rising too high the Colonel’s tact is well to the fore, and that concludes the entertainment for the evening, as the conjurers say.

When these lines are read I shall have journeyed over the Bernina Pass, through Italian Switzerland down to Milan. The rather harsh Swiss-German tongue will have given place to the liquid Italian: place-names will end with "o" instead of "tz."

I shall have seen the greyish coat worn by Como's lake in winter, breathed a wish to Balbianello to tell me its sinister history, and waved a hand of greeting towards Villa d'Este, its hand-kissing counts, and lovely American girls, one of whom, at least—Mrs. Gloria Spreckles—has promised me not to smoke with her meals if I meet her in Milan.

MILAN

February

"A FINE PERFORMANCE, I thought, didn't you?" "Yes, but I heard it done recently at La Scala." So often does the speaker try not to emphasise the last sentence, implying a wealth of concealed knowledge which longs to be unleashed.

There are, of course, magnificent performances of opera all over the world, but somehow this theatre in Milan holds the pride of place in the hearts of all lovers of romantic opera; there is ever present the urge at some time to make a pilgrimage to La Scala.

From the outside it looks rather unobtrusive for an opera house, with a frontage about the size of Drury Lane. Inside, you at once begin to absorb the atmosphere which has not varied much since Stendhal, a contemporary of Napoleon, described it in *Chartreuse de Parme*.

The police wear the Napoleonic uniforms with cocked hats designed when the Emperor was in Milan in 1814. You will notice Italian officers in their full-dress uniform hurrying to the boxes reserved for the Army and the Air Force, also that eighty per cent of the audience wear tail-coats and white ties.

Inside in the stalls nearly everybody is standing up, and you watch the lighted clock above the top of the stage register eight fifty-five. As it swings round to nine the huge chandelier with 365 bulbs goes out, leaving the box lights only.

There are four rows of boxes and two tiers above them, partitioned as boxes, but which form the galleries. The figures in the boxes are silhouetted against a soft pink background for about half a minute, then all is in darkness except for that illuminated clock, and the orchestra begins.

From that moment no influence in the world can get you into the stalls until the end of the act, and you must sit outside and talk to one of the black-uniformed attendants, who wear knee-breeches and silver chains of office, or slip up to the bar and have a couple of Stregas.

It is all right if you have a box, but they are never easy to obtain, being almost all subscribed for at every performance. Nor are stalls simple to book, and the best plan is to consult the hall-porter at your hotel: remember that the house is sold out for every performance all through the season.

Look at the box on the left of the stage at the bottom and you will notice a very distinguished figure sitting alone. It will be *Grande Ufficiale Jenner Mataloni, Sovraintendente della Scala*: in other words, La Scala's No. 1, and the only one. Under him works a huge organisation which is incapable of muddling; nor would anyone muddle or meddle much with Mataloni. Once he has decided the programmes for the season they never vary, and the lack of understudies is unheard of.

Surely Covent Garden needs a Mataloni, one who can devote his whole time and energy to organisation and initiate a process of sensible decentralisation which seems at present to be wanting there?

At the moment I am rather like a soused herring, but I am not saturated with vinegar ("For once," did a voice whisper?). I am swimming in a pleasantly rocking sea



LORD LYTTON JUDGING THE
SKATING COMPETITION
AT MURREN.



MR. HUBERT MARTINEAU AND
PRINCE RENÉ DE BOURBON,
ABOUT TO GO DOWN THE BOB-
RUN AT ST. MORITZ.



MISS NANCY HARWOOD-BANNER AT SCHEIDEGG WITH FRIEND (L).

LA SCALA'S NO. 1.
GRANDE UFFICIALE
JENNER MATALONI.



BENIAMINO GIGLI.

of Italian opera, and the ships which sail upon that sea have all a song to sing. I have heard two performances of *La Bobème*, the production of which was incomparable, especially the crowd scene in the second act; and Nicolas Benois has designed beautiful new settings for the opera.

Milan readily acclaimed its new tenor, Lugo, who has a good voice but not yet in the powerful top class of Gigli, who sang in the first performance of *Ballo in Maschera*. In this opera I heard an Italian baritone than whom I personally have heard no better anywhere. He was Armando Borgioli who is no relation to the tenor Dino Borgioli: he gained from La Scala's audience one of those thunder-clap applauses of which only the Italians are capable—after he had sung "*Eri tu . . .*" in the third act.

Even Gigli had not had such applause during the performance, and it brought him out in the fourth act like a tiger after its prey. And what a supreme singer he is! His phrasing, his *mezza voce*, and his *pianissimos* get somehow better each year: every tenor worthy to be called one can always trot out the top notes amid a wealth of orchestral *fortissimos*.

Gigli is a quiet little man of about forty-eight, who enjoys playing piquet more than anything, except singing to an appreciative audience. Harold Holt, after a very successful concert at a packed Albert Hall, went to him in the artists' room, saying: "My dear Beniamino, you must be tired to death—you need not have sung so many encores." And Gigli replied: "But what else could I do? They touch my heart with their kindness: therefore they must have all that I can give."

Gigli always stays at the Continental, in the ornate, dark red, heavily furnished grand suite which is reserved for the great stars singing at La Scala. The shade of

Caruso surely hovers round it, watching his successor without a trace of jealousy: that generous soul never knew the meaning of the word. You have only to hear Luisa Tetrazzini—now giving singing lessons here in Milan—talk about him to realise what a great man he was, apart from his voice.

And in the atmosphere of her white drawing-room, complete with gilt full-length portraits of the *diva* herself, and with such faces looking at you as those of Caruso, Scotti, Jean de Reske, Puccini, Verdi and Leoncavallo, you may recapture a few moments of the golden age of opera.

There is an English (or rather Irish) *prima donna* who was one of the real favourites at La Scala: Margaret Sheridan never has had the recognition in England which she received in Italy. I cannot give a personal opinion, not having heard her sing: Gigli's approval and strong endorsement are quite sufficient.

You should see the great tenor at his seaside place (called the Villa Gigli) on the Adriatic, near Porto Recanati, where he spends the summer. I remember motoring along this coast and being pointed out the property, which extends almost as far as you can see from the villa, perched on a hill.

The garden is replete with fountains and monumental urns interspersed among rare shrubs; indoors the great tenor passes across marble floors from room to room through wrought-iron gates under Florentine ceilings, entertaining numerous guests. Never are there fewer than twenty people to a meal, with every member of the family present, his accompanist and secretary, all with their wives and children.

The morning exodus to the beach is a fine sight, for

the whole town turns out to cheer Gigli, who is photographed at due intervals wearing his yachting costume. And his *palazzo* outside Rome is a gorgeous place, with so much gilt that on a sunny morning you can only sit quietly still and blink.

It was from Somerset Maugham that I received the hint about Stendhal's description of La Scala. In return I could tell him that one of his plays, *Lady Frederick*, was being produced at the Odeon Theatre, but he showed more inclination to visit the Brera Museum on the next day, while I was due to escort Mrs. Gloria Spreckles to the refectory of the Dominican Convent, next to the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, there to find "The Last Supper," by Leonardo da Vinci.

And a visit to the Cathedral is another inevitable pilgrimage in this city. When going down to see the mummified corpse of the famous Archbishop Carlo Borromeo, I must try to memorise the lines from C. A. Renshaw's poem, *Lest We Forget*:—

"Out of the sunlight, golden and serene,
We enter in below the dizzy height,
And by a flickering candle's hazy light
We grope down fifteen steps. . . .
There he lies
In lavish silks of gorgeous colouring,
On every fleshless finger a glittering ring."

I nearly brought off a big treble this year of "first times" by taking Mr. Maugham to La Scala, Mr. Gilbert Frankau to the bar of the Cavalry Club on being elected a member, and Sir Hugh Walpole to his Cumberland lake ("A fragment of silver glass at the feet of Skiddaw")

to fish for the trout which rise so happily there on a June evening. It was the last that failed, entirely through my own neglectful fault, and now that he no longer is tied to Hollywood, my hopes are high for next summer.

For you who will come to visit the theatre named after La Scala, the wife of Duke Visconti of Milan in the fourteenth century (it was built in 1776), I offer the Italian greeting, "*Buon divertimento.*"

And take good care not to arrive on a day when the theatre is marked "*Riposo*," which is two days or so a week: the Excelsior Gallia Hotel will always send you a leaflet with the dates. The opera season opens each year on Boxing Day, and closes about the last week in April.

SIMPLON-ORIENT EXPRESS

February

THIS NOBLE TRAIN, which has just stood snorting in Milan station for twenty minutes, has now pulled itself out on its way to Domodossola, Vallorbe, and Paris. It bears passengers who come from such places as Istanbul—Athens—Belgrade—Zagreb—Trieste, according to the white boards on the dark blue coaches. These towns sound so far away, and rather romantic; they are not all quite so romantic when you visit them.

In a few minutes the white-coated conductor will tinkle his funny little bell up and down the corridor, and I shall repair to my meal in the *carrozza-ristorante*. It must be an *Americano* for an *apéritif*, although I have had one already before leaving, in the bar of the Excelsior Gallia Hotel in Milan with M. Vittorio Gallia.

These drinks are very mild (Campari bitter, Italian vermouth, a splash of soda, a piece of lemon, and ice), and I felt I could do no harm if, with my dinner, I had a last half-bottle of *soave*, a white wine so delicately temperamental that even in its home country one sometimes catches an indifferent bottle.

Nor should I be in a state of pedantic inebriety if later during the meal I changed to a red *grignolino*, for being introduced to which I have to thank Mr. Somerset Maugham. It goes well with Gorgonzola cheese, of which the home is just a few miles away.

A liqueur glass of *strega*, and the last *lira* is almost spent. Never have I lived so cheaply as during the last few days, with the tourist rate at about one hundred *lira*

to the pound; moreover, the intense gratitude of an Italian for a tip is most marked, in contrast to the surly querulousness sometimes seen elsewhere.

I shall miss my cards this evening. Bridge (with one table of poker) is the soul of a Milanese party. There are bridge parties given every night, the usual procedure being to go in after dinner about nine-thirty and play hard till one a.m., after which a large buffet supper is served; and then you sit down again till two-thirty or three a.m.

From what I could judge they are absolutely first-class players, and all request you to play the Forcing Two system. On one occasion I had for most of the evening as opponent one of the Rothschilds, and the clan can rest assured that none of its gold left the family vaults on my account.

As regards poker, I was advised (also by Mr. Somerset Maugham) not to take part unless I was an expert in the Italian game and accustomed to playing with a stripped pack—and in Italian. Thirty-two cards only are used in the pack, besides one or two differences of play over which one can make very costly mistakes. But on all occasions I found them most delightful opponents and partners, the latter so often the more difficult rôle.

The best entertaining in Milanese society is done by Signor Aldo Crespi, who, with his two brothers Mario and Vittorio, is the proprietor of the *Corriere della Sera*, the most powerful newspaper in Italy.

Signor Crespi's house in the Corso Venezia is not only a museum but a very comfortable residence, entirely modernised within. It is pleasant to think that you are playing bridge beneath, probably, the two best Canaletto pictures in the country.

Although I did not visit the Brera museum, I went to a house opposite it belonging to a member of the Venetian family of Venier, which has a small private collection. Experts in Italian Old Masters would much appreciate the Cosimo Tura and some works of Jacopo Bellini.

There is plenty of night life in Milan. After the opera there are several places where you can sit up quite happily (if that is your idea of happiness) until four a.m. In the Vecchia Milano I found many whom I had seen in the autumn at Villa d'Este, including M. Willy Dombré and his wife, also many of the staff of the hotel.

I then discovered that the *maître d'hôtel* and the barman of Villa d'Este both own Hagy's (the excellent restaurant above the night-club) as well as Vecchia Milano, and give them their personal attention in the winter, returning to Villa d'Este when it opens in March.

A visit to the Certosa at Pavia was necessary because of a change there since my last visit in 1919. Carthusian monks have returned, twenty-one in number, under an English prior; otherwise nothing else has changed for six hundred years, since its foundation by the Visconti family.

The monks lead a life which would not have pleased Mrs. Gloria Spreckels, my pretty American companion: they are under vows of silence and solitude, and though she affirmed her ability to keep them if necessary, the rest of us had to persuade her that life at Altamura would suit her better.

This mythical monastery, lying among remote Italian mountains, interprets and "renders holy all human experience; a rule of faith with pomps and festivals and fasts." October must have been a great month

in Altamura, when their saints were the great Epicureans —Epicurus himself, Horace, Maecenas, Hadrian, Hohenstaufen, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Goethe.

*“Crown we our heads with roses then,
And ’noint with Tyrian balm.”*

LONDON

February

IN THE ART of sitting and forgetting, as practised in the Chinese cult of disintegration, I am not an apt disciple. Showflakes have been whirling round my head, though they are soon swallowed in such a practical sea as London in February. The music of Puccini has been singing away in my ears, insinuating itself like a tortuous drug, always trying to teach one that it has great depth below its surface of cloying sweetness.

But the antidotes are complete (familiar faces which eclipse those of new acquaintanceships, a heavyweight fight, a comic film, a night-club or two), and I am set once more on the path of endeavour.

The journey over the Channel was made much the more pleasant by renewing acquaintanceship with Mr. Hart, purser of the *Maid of Kent*, and Mr. Humphreys, the good shepherd of all who travel in Pullmans. I say "renewing" because aeroplane travel to Paris gives one that extra hour or two so necessary on short visits, and it is certainly five years since I have travelled by boat. Yet I might have only seen them the day before, so warm was their welcome. And we do all so enjoy being remembered.

There are two golden rules for all men journeying in *wagons-lits*: one is to travel in grey flannel trousers and an old coat, leaving your suit on top of the case to put on as soon as you get to the hotel; the other is to shave before arriving at your destination. Otherwise

on arrival you will be sure to find yourself next to that pretty girl whom you admired so much overnight in the restaurant-car.

Girls are very susceptible to matutinal impressions; a sullen, incipient beard seen in the strong glare of a Riviera morning sun is no aid to an informal introduction.

My return each year from the winter lands brings the anticipatory joy of thinking out which lakes and rivers I will visit before the pike-fishing season closes in the middle of March. There is a lovely list to study, all beautifully indexed with marginal notes like: "Invited to stay in house"—"Take evening clothes on chance"—"Tea and drinks after fishing"—"Boathouse only"—"Lunch dependent on morning reflections of host"—"Don't ask after daughter of house. Has eloped to Sicily with violinist." Such reminders keep one straight in the struggle for tact.

And annually do I heap imprecations upon the head of Namvulu, king of the rain and storm, who lives as far away as Bomma at the mouth of the Congo River. His efforts in reducing every waterway in the British Isles to the colour of pea-soup are always coincident with my mobilisation of rods and tackle.

So, with that patience which, if not born in every angler, is sooner or later thrust upon him, I remain in reserve for the early trout streams. In March you can flog little Welsh and West Country rivers with those flies which Lord Tennyson (Lionel, not grandfather Alfred) calls "Feb-wua-wy Weds and March B-wowns," never forgetting the nimble worm when the keeper has gone home to his dinner.

IN SEARCH OF SPORT
WITH INTERLUDES

Number One

NORTHERN FRANCE

MANOIR DE NEAUFLES SAINT-MARTIN,
GISORS, EURE

May

THIS ADDRESS REPRESENTS the Mecca of an annual pilgrimage. Lovers of the works of Guy de Maupassant may think that I come here to offer tribute to the scene of his famous story, *Le Rosier de Madame Husson*. I greatly respect the town for that reason, also for its church and castle, but most of all do I pay homage to its river, the Epte, which runs through M. Edmond Veil-Picard's bloodstock farm. It is a majestic river, about the breadth of the Thames, and contains huge trout which only rise during the mayfly season.

Wherefore you may discern that my pilgrimage is not of saintly nature, unless you raise the mayfly to the dignity of the patron saint of all trout fishermen.

The routine of thought in my journey is unchanging. At Victoria I am just as impressed with the Continental boat train as if I had never crossed the Channel. As the boat leaves Newhaven, the lights of Brighton give out her naughty twinkles; on the other side of the ship Seaford snores contentedly, and I murmur a prayer of thanks that I am on board S.S. *Worthing* and not on one of the tubs which used to roll into the harbour in the early 1900's.

At Dieppe, having lain aboard until the reasonable hour of 7.30 a.m., one is awakened by the affectionate greetings of the French fisherfolk to each other as they discuss the prices of the overnight catch.

Song-writers have told us about roses blooming in

Picardy, also about daffodil-time in Brittany, but I do not think that apple-blossom days in Normandy have had nearly enough recognition. The trees bloom only once in three years, and luckily do not elect to do so all in the same year. At this season the new cider (made the previous October) starts to ferment in the bottles out of sympathy with the apple-blossom: a touching tribute, and very enjoyable to the drinker of the cider.

Even the champagne magnates visit Normandy in May, but not to drink the cider. The lure is the *mouche de mai*, which makes them assemble like a flock of pigeons. In the mornings on Dieppe golf-course one can see Prince Jean de Caraman-Chimay with his wife, who is good enough to fish for France: he can give you a glass of Veuve Clicquot, for he is one of the heads of the firm. Similarly from Count Charles de Polignac you could beg a glass of Pommery et Greno, and from Count Robert de Vogüé a taste of Moët et Chandon.

The motor drive from Dieppe to Gisors reinforces an affection for the surrounding place-names: there are dark, wintry days in London, when I see again the kilometre stones—Torcy-le-Grand; Les Hayons, with its huge four cross-roads; Forges-les-Faux, somehow called a spa and casino town; Gournay, where the Pommel cream cheeses are made. And every road in Normandy seems to want to take one to Les Andelys, where Brigadier Gerard had an adventure or two, according to Conan Doyle.

Just beyond Gisors lies the bloodstock farm of M. Edmond Veil-Picard, where live his son-in-law and pretty daughter, M. and Mme Jacques Foussier. It was M. Veil-Picard who was the hero of that exploit in his early youth (he is now "*un vrai ancien*") with the Besançon

fire brigade. On another occasion he distinguished himself as a balloonist, also in Besançon.

He was one of the three notabilities selected to go up in the first non-captive balloon ascent from this city. Accordingly on a bright afternoon the worthy townfolk assembled in the market square to wish *bon voyage* to M. le Maire, the Député (M. Ordinaire by name), and M. Veil-Picard.

After many speeches and with much hand-kissing and throwing of flowers into the balloon basket, to the strains of the town band they ascended, amid the cheers of the populace. But when they reached the height from which immediate descent was deemed advisable, not one of the three knew which cord to pull to release the gas from the bag.

With much gesticulation both from the ground and from the balloon, and a great deal of argument, luckily the right cord was at last pulled, but not before the party had enjoyed a protracted view of the Jura Mountains. Slowly the balloon descended, hailed with sighs of relief from the crowd. And just when it was about to complete the remaining 15 feet to the ground, M. Veil-Picard smartly leapt out to make sure of his landing.

The balloon showed its joy by shooting straight up into the air; in it remained M. le Maire and M. Ordinaire, shaking fists at their colleague. With the last glimmer of daylight, hungry, thirsty, and very frightened, they brought the balloon back to earth, and this time there was no medal for M. Veil-Picard.

There is also the occasion when he went to luncheon with the late Mr. James Gordon Bennett in his yacht lying at Villefranche, near Nice; in the middle of the

meal M. Veil-Picard looked out of the window and found the ship was at sea. And there it remained for three months.

Mr. Gordon Bennett thought it was an excellent joke, especially as his guest had no luggage. Nor was M. Veil-Picard ever allowed to land at the ports except at Tangier, where, as his one suit was getting worn out, he had to wear Mr. Gordon Bennett's clothes. As these were several sizes too large for him, the couple were followed all through the town by hordes of little Arab boys, who also thought it was a great joke.

The late morning is an agreeable time to arrive at the Manoir de Neaufles Saint-Martin. After greeting one's hostess with true Gallic courtesy, and waving a greeting to the children as they whizz round the gardens on their electric scooters, a Byrrh *sec et frappé* is produced by the host in his bar; here are many frescoes with paintings of his fishing friends, like Mr. Ernest Rowat ("Podger" to the London Stock Exchange) and Colonel Claude Marcel, a real "*type*," English of French extraction. When he throws a mayfly it is as though its body were loaded with lead as it hits the water, yet the trout seem to love it.

Luncheon is one of those meals which is only just begun when you think it is finished, and how thoughtful of someone to recall that the mayfly is not hatching till about five o'clock! For I can sit on the veranda with Proust's *Du Côté de Chez Swann* (or: "How to doze off in ten minutes"), peeping across the broad meadows where the mares and foals are grazing, towards the willows which mark the river's course. There I will spy the tall figure of Dr. Gordon Reeve hiding behind a tree, watching for the movements of a big fish. Besides being a

skilful fisherman he is a good barometer for anglers—if he is seen about, so are fish.

At half-past four, after a cool draught of Vermouth and Perrier (if your mouth ever feels like the bottom of a parrot's cage, do not forget this drink), I put up my Ogden Smith eight-foot-six "Warrior," a stained gut-cast tapered to 3x, an *araignée de Gisors*, which is a grey hackled mayfly (winged ones are not popular here), and off we go to the old mill, selfishly hoping that nobody is on my favourite stretch. "They got a four-pounder and two threes yesterday—the sky is cloudy—atmosphere muggy and warm—should be perfect this evening," I muse. On this occasion, though, just as the fly started to appear, so did the instructions of the district Prefect become only too evident—that weed-cutting should be in progress during this particular week. And the weed certainly hatched out better than the fly. Fortunately, this is a rare occurrence, for it causes my host to dance about on the bank in justifiable anger.

Evreux

While the other guests were all out fishing on the Epte yesterday afternoon, I had to make a typical *départ anglais*. This is the French term for going away without saying good-bye to anyone, which, they say, is an English characteristic. We use the expression "French leave," but in the sense of avoiding the formality of asking for leave of absence.

Driving myself in a hireling French car (shades of Godfrey Davis and his Humber Snipes!), of which the exterior was as beautiful as a French mannequin on a fine day at Longchamp, and of which the inner

machinations were also about as complicated as their scheming little brains, I had occasion to note that the good French *paysanne* is as kindly as ever. The spark of the car failed dismally at ten o'clock at night in a little village near Saint-André-de-l'Eure, and, as its good inhabitants had been asleep for at least two hours, there seemed little hope of a swift repair.

Yet the local schoolmistress, who seemed to be in charge of the village, not only found a car to take me into Evreux but also a husband who delivered my own car safely there the next morning. Moreover she banished my peevish looks by saying that I should have forgotten it all by the time I was safely in the Grand Cerf at Evreux.

The light of the full moon helped to make this quiet, calm hamlet a much more habitable place than when I had spluttered into it an hour earlier. It is just the spot to provide a rest-cure for tired débutantes at the end of the season, and if any mothers would like to know the name they shall have it by return of post.

The Grand Cerf at Evreux, in the care of its owner, M. Pacciarella, is the half-way house for motorists between Deauville and Paris; it is also on the direct motor route from Northern France to the Biarritz borders, and much used by English tourists. But the traffic has slackened off considerably during the Spanish Civil War. The proprietor of this *auberge* has a lovely collection of original Sem cartoons; Mr. Berry Wall, the Aga Khan, and Mrs. Julie Thompson are among the subjects who would be known to Londoners.

Between Evreux and Dreux, on a road which it takes a course of map-reading at the Cavalry School to be able to discover, lies the *château* of Mme Jacques Balsan, at



M. EDMOND VEIL-PICARD.



VIVE LE SPORT!



A WAR-TIME MEMORY—THE



ON THE BRESLE.
MAJOR A. C. M. ANDERSON AND
THE HON. REGINALD FELLOWES.



M. AND MADAME JACQUES FOUSSIER.

Saint-Georges Motel. She is the good fairy of the whole countryside, which surrounds a property bearing that stamp of perfection and beauty always associated with her houses.

Mme Balsan, who always remains, even to those who may only know her by sight, one of the really distinguished women of our time, takes a very large part in the organisation of the Fondation Foch in Paris. This is a hospital, dedicated to the memory of the great Marshal, built on a site near Boulogne-sur-Seine just outside Paris, for the use of educated persons of small means.

The Eure flows past the *Château* of Saint-Georges Motel, and on it is a river-keeper who must surely win the snuff-taking championship of the district. He also has the ability to pick up stinging nettles without hurting himself; in these nettles he wraps up the trout to preserve their freshness—and the nettles must be dry. In the last half-hour before sundown (you are not allowed by French law to fish after that hour) nine trout of 1 lb. each found a resting-place in the nettles. And before that there was not a stir on the water, no fault of anybody, except a north-east wind.

“And moveless fish in the water gleam
By silver reeds in a silver stream.”

It is not only the fishing which one enjoys: there is the freshness of the countryside smothered in apple blossom; nightingales which sing until dawn; the calm and peace of the water-meadows; the miracle of nature in the hatch of the mayfly; the conversations and plans about the capture of big trout; and last, and quite least, the catching of them.

PARIS

May

"WHEN I RETIRE to my rural solitudes, and taste once more those pure delights of Nature which the poets celebrate—walks in the unambitious meadows, and the ever-satisfying companionship of vegetables and flowers—I am incongruously beset by language of which the Lake poets never sang. I hear, in the babbling brooks, the sound of London gossip, and newsboys' voices in the cries of the birds.

"Sometimes the gold-splashed distance of a country lane seems to gleam at sunset with the posters of the evening papers: I dream at dawn of dinner invitations, when, like a telephone call, I hear the greenfinch trill his electric bell."

These are the thoughts of Logan Pearsall Smith in his anthology, *All Trivia*. They are mine, too, even sometimes when I sit on the banks of the Epte and the Eure: that is why I have slipped into Paris for a day or two for a breath of the *essence romantique*, distilled here in the late spring.

After spending a great deal of the morning arranging meetings on the Paris telephone, where that magic word "*entendu*" is temporarily so reassuring but eventually so deceptive, a visit to the Ritz Bar is needed to test its true merits, apart from seeing who is to be found in that clearing-house of Continental travellers.

And the Ritz always keeps its clientèle, mostly due to the personality of Frank, the barman, who has written

a most useful book, not only on drinks, but containing also very much general information. Here you can see the backgammon experts at play. If you oppose M. Max Ausnitz, the Rumanian oil king, Prince "Nicky" Toumanoff, Mr. "Freddie" McEvoy or Mr. Neil O'Malley Keyes you will be meeting some fine players. The last-named recently won a thousand pounds at backgammon, and has employed the money in standing himself a trip round the world.

The Ritz Bar is divided into two halves: the first you may not enter unless accompanied by a woman, and the second is for men only (here you will see the backgammon and hear conversation about "*le business*"). But always poke your head into the first half to see who is about: you can often find an excuse to be guilty of that reprehensible habit of "joining up" with a party, after the fashion of a popular peer who does a round tour of the fashionable London restaurants on those lines. It was nice on this particular visit to hear the pleasant American voice of Mrs. Ormond Lawson Johnston and the welcome of "Come and sit with us, do, dear. Ormondy boy" (*she calls her husband that*) "is at the Travellers' Club; he'll be along any minute." For from her one is sure to hear all the news of International Society, though she herself has retired from that whirlpool which enmeshes its members, and consequently leads a much more enjoyable, dignified and happy existence.

Always am I asked about Mrs. Charles Sweeny, who is much admired in Paris. One can truthfully say that she is looking very pretty and that she maintains a popularity (to which her kindness and charm of manner have contributed) which is not the prerogative of some of her contemporaries.

As a change from the smart bars I like sometimes to sit outside the cafés, trying to be a real *boulevardier*, sipping Byrrh, Raphaël, Pernod or Mandarin, or sucking other similar syrupy concoctions through straws.

Luncheon at Larue, one of the few remaining Parisian restaurants of the older style, where the *grande cuisine* is supreme, showed Lord Carnarvon (just returned from staying with Lord Derby at Cannes) hurrying off with Vicomte Sebastian Foy to the races at Maisons-Laffitte. He was in a hurry, because he had not hurried over his luncheon: the proprietor of Larue would rightly treat that as sacrilege and an insult to his chef.

Another of my favourite luncheon resorts is Prunier's, either "down-town" in the Rue Duphot or "up-west" at Traktir off the Champs-Élysées. In both places you will be sitting over a couple of million bottles of wine, in case you are really thirsty. Try, one day, a light white wine, Château de la Lorie, from the vineyard of Count Louis de Saint-Genys: it is a good accompaniment to Prunier's *Belons*, *Armoricaines*, or *Marennnes*, from the oyster family.

And I rarely fail, on a visit here, to chalk up my number for a duck at Le Tour d'Argent, or to see how the snails at L'Escargot have progressed after their meals on Burgundian vine-leaves.

An afternoon's golf at Saint-Cloud is very enjoyable in fine weather; the two courses are good, and one of them very good and very difficult. Do not forget that, like the Fontainebleau course, it is closed on Tuesdays. The club is barely a quarter of an hour away from Paris, and all the way, when playing round, you can see the Eiffel Tower and Montmartre hill, much better known by night than by day.

The green fee is very expensive (it works out at about £1 10s. od.) and seems excessive compared to those, even on a Saturday and Sunday, of the finest courses in England. Still, it was reassuring to one's golf to go round in 80 (for 15 holes) on the Green Course, and very enjoyable to see the Parisian débutantes (also the ones who are ex, post, and super) fluttering round the course in their spring creations. Do not imagine that because they are attractive they cannot play golf. Mlle Martine Petit-le-Roy whose brother is one of the best players in the club, would be very difficult to beat on her handicap.

There are worse after-luncheon hardships than half an hour at one of the leading dressmakers', provided that you are not committed to support the whims of your escort. It was in Schiaparelli's, in the Place Vendôme, that I sat among French and American women, for whom this was the day's big moment. Aristocratic *vendeuses* sat on either side of me, giving orders to the page-boy, Paul, a little fellow about the size of a ferret's claw, wearing a pill-box cap. "Beautiful for the evening, don't you think?" whispered one of the *vendeuses* as a mannequin walked towards me without the trace of a smile on her face, showing off one of the latest creations. "Perfectly lovely," I replied, not looking entirely at the creation, I am afraid. But, really, that mannequin was so beautiful one could scarcely tell if she were real or born of a snowdrift.

I was glad to have the opportunity to hear Lily Pons sing in *Rigoletto* at the Opera House. She excels when she is doing what one may term the "trick stuff," but the rest of her register seems no better than that of the ordinary operatic soprano. She has a very attractive

stage personality as well as good looks, which drew to her dressing-room after the performance queues of elderly Frenchmen, who specialised in white ties, white moustaches, black waistcoats, and top-hats, almost out of the pages of George du Maurier.

Paris arrives late for its opera, even on a night that was described as a *soirée romantique*. They have no Sir Thomas Beecham to goad them into punctuality: moreover, the lights remained on for the whole of the first act. I thought it was to aid the late-comers, but discovered it was to "light up the stage in the brilliant ballroom scene."

The amount of "walking about" space which exists in the Paris Opera House is incredibly large; behind the scenes it is like going over the Naval Barracks at Chatham.

Black beards were better at the *Grand Guignol* this time than on my last visit. A sinister Chinaman did some neat yet dirty work, and as for the final farce, it was more Gallic than any I have ever seen. It caused Mr. Richard Owen, the famous art collector, to glance nervously at his daughter Florrie, and wonder whether he had not better take her home to study the beauties of a new Manet which he has just discovered. This picture depicts a scene at Paris-Plage in 1883, which is even before the days when Lord Portarlington visited this resort.

And then there are my visits to Sainte-Clotilde, to which all lovers of the music of César Franck should go. It was in the organ-loft of this church that the greatest works of the French master were written, and where inspiration beckoned. Recall for an instant Rongier's picture of Franck sitting at the organ, his left hand on a manual and his right on one of the stops, while his eyes are half closed as if listening for the mystic chants which came to him.

DIEPPE

May

LIKE THE ARAB to his steed, or the philosopher Colline to his coat in the last act of *La Bohème*, I bid a sad farewell to-night to a muddy but gallant little car, as she waits in the courtyard of the Métropole Hotel to be collected by a distant *garagiste*.

In a week she has seen every sort of water except that from a wash-hose—a swollen, turgid Eure, a muddy Avre, a swirling-brown Varenne, a reddish Béthune, a green-hued Eaulne, and a Bresle clearing at last to its wonted silver-black tint.

For the weather has given us its best variety of concert pieces, at first a few days of the Nordic bleakness of a Sibelius tone-poem, swiftly changing to the shimmering lights depicted by Debussy, and by Delius's nocturne, "A Summer Night on the River."

In one of Maupassant's stories he describes what a river signifies to a fisherman, for whom land has boundaries, while the river appears unlimited. It means mystery, mirage, and phantasmagoria, where odd things that have no real existence are seen at night and strange noises are heard: anglers can all recognise the nocturnal musicians of the swamps, the frogs and the toads with their short, monotonous, and gloomy notes. There are other queer sounds, too.

This visit to Normandy is almost a sentimental journey; yet such ruminations are like obituary notices, of little importance except to those intimately aware of the subject.

I begin always in Rouen, for it was in the month of May that I was deposited there on my first visit to France as a young officer twenty-two years ago. Orders detailed me to the base camp on the hill: a friendly brother-officer who knew the ropes ordered me instead a bedroom at the Hôtel de la Poste.

The first luncheon (and luncheons seem so much more important meals in France than dinners) in this neighbourhood is of supreme importance, for from that moment there will be a *diminuendo* in your powers of appreciating such good cooking.

And that meal provides one grand gobble. In the Place Vieux Marché, at the Restaurant de la Couronne, I found that I had been made a member by the proprietor, M. Lucien Dorin, of the Comité de Saint-Amant, who was a Falstaffian-type of *bon-viveur* poet some decades ago. The Society has purchased a large vessel which will be moored to the quay of Rouen, and I should think that the opening *déjeuner* on board will combine dinner, too.

The first few snacks at La Couronne consisted of five courses, at which one just nibbled so as not to be *trop gonflé*. It began with *pâté de canard* (great duck country around Rouen), in which were other ingredients about which one should never ask. Next, a sole of which the sauce consisted of the remnant of the *cuisson* (white wine), mixed with egg yolk, butter, shrimps, mussels, and mushrooms.

By now one's appetite was quite ready for some sheep's trotters, a little Brie cheese, and some strawberries to help one finish the half-bottle of Margaux 1925. As a *boisson* before this there had been some red-yellow sparkling cider, and at the end came some Calvados many years older than I.

I wish that *eaux-de-vie* were in more frequent use as liqueurs in England. In Normandy one usually drinks *calvados*, which is the *eau-de-vie* of the apple, and it follows naturally after a bottle of cider. After all, brandy is but the *eau-de-vie* of the grape, as is *kirsch* that of the cherry, *prunelle* that of the small dark plum, *mirabelle* that of the small yellow plum, and *framboise* that of raspberries. All these *eaux-de-vie* (or *alcools de fruits*) have to be very good, or they taste like methylated spirit with a touch of scent.

"But I thought you were there for trout-fishing," you may say. Let me explain that the French mayfly is a sensible creature which rarely makes an appearance until the late afternoon. For this reason I have time to salute the Convent at the top of the hill as one leaves the town (I lay wounded there in 1918 in a niche vacated temporarily by the statue of a saint), and be on the water 30 kilometres away to greet the numerous telegrams of regret from friends who could not turn up.

I felt as charitably-minded as Mme de Sévigné, who consoled herself with the philosophic thought that bad company was better than no company at all, and even better than good: the departure of tiresome guests was so delightful.

However, I could always move on to Blangy to join two companions from the Travellers' Club, Major A. C. M. Anderson, who spends many of his fishing hours in sketching, and Mr. Reginald Fellowes, whose green corduroy trousers are the most sensible that I have ever seen for the waterside. Major Anderson, on the other hand, believes in an immaculacy of attire: you can never fault him for being incorrectly dressed for any sport at any hour of the day.

Both these anglers and Mr. Arthur Impey can always be found at Blangy-sur-Bresle these mayfly days: still for me does this continue as a sentimental journey, for I was billeted there and fished this river in 1917. As I descend the hill from the Haute Forêt d'Eu I always half expect to see the regiment of French dragoons with their horses picketed in the apple orchards, our neighbours in those days.

And what has happened to that pretty actress who was "resting" at Blangy in those days? Tenderly do I look at the house where she lived: it somehow all looks so changed (yet not a house is changed one whit), and I make sidelong, fruitless enquiries in the little hotel, where they know everything. There was a romantic *arrangement* to meet Rosalie in Paris on my three days' leave: to Colonel Antony Lowther (he was then a subaltern in the 10th Hussars) I poured out my hopes over a magnum of champagne at dinner in the Café de Paris. And looking up from the table my eyes caught those of the ace-charmer of those days—Lily Maud, as fair as an English débutante, and alone except for a large car and a large Alsatian dog. Rosalie was forgotten.

I rejoined my regiment feeling as guilty as Dorian Gray, and that the first streak of cruel deception would show on my countenance.

This river Bresle fishes very well. Mr. Arthur Impey has just produced a 4½-lb. fish caught on a mayfly (and not by other means so commonly attributed to French fishing), and I believe this stretch is the best in the whole neighbourhood, though that owned by Prince Jean de Caraman Chimay on the Varenne is perhaps the more difficult to fish. The Princess is the most successful of any angler in the district: her fly, "La Princesse," is

very potent on this river, yet was invented by her by accident and not with hours of fly-tying.

You can buy this fly in Paris at the Magasin du Louvre, and in London at Ogden Smiths', who also sell the other famous French "killer" called "Le Président Billard": it is a fly which is said to incite the trout to a fury (you should pull its wings and hackles about to make it look like an angry bee), and is a great success on the Risle, a river corresponding to the Test in England.

The next morning sees me sitting contentedly in the river-keeper's cottage on the banks of the Eaulne where it flows through the little Norman hamlet of Envermeu. On either side of the valley are more of those Hautes Forêts: all over this country the Duke of Westminster hunts the wild boar. On a 30-kilometre sea-front with Dieppe as the centre seven rivers run into the Channel, all full of trout; three of them, the Varenne, the Béthune, and the Eaulne, form Dieppe harbour.

All these streams were dynamited by the troops for their contents during the war, yet two years after they were back to their normal fishing state, and they are never stocked. Six-and seven-pound fish are caught each year; I suspect on worms and minnows, for they are usually photographed in decease with a much-moustached French sportsman.

Outside the cottage gurgle the murmurings of the river as it passes over the stickles; in the distance is the tinkle of the church bell, coming from a rather rickety, leaning steeple. The mayfly is due at about 2 o'clock, according to the keeper, so luncheon must not be a long meal. An early visit to the Dieppe fish market had produced a mackerel and a whiting, caught that very dawn, a small cheese from the dairies of Neufchâtel-

en-Bray, two boiled eggs whose "whites" would qualify to run along the Milky Way, orange-coloured foaming cider bottled last autumn by the keeper, coffee and calvados; no more is needed—except a small grumble.

I wish that Colonel Frederick Cripps would confine himself to looking after Douglas's, his hairdressing establishment, and the interests of Ayala champagne for which he is the English agent, instead of collecting old masters. Unfortunately, he has bought the fox-shooting picture which used to hang on the walls of this parlour, and has presented it to his wife for her hunting-box at Melton.

The picture, which would have shaken Landseer to the core, is that of an outsize in foxes being shot. This huge animal, as big as a wolf, is shown leaving its earth with the most pained expression on its face. And rather naturally, for an enthusiastic sportsman, complete with feathered hat, cartridge bag, and gaiters, has just discharged into the unfortunate animal's neck both barrels (seemingly at once) of his shot-gun.

The sportsman wears a rather confident smile, and rightly, as the range is about two yards. In the background waits a keeper with two dogs, also a friend "at the ready" with another gun: in the far distance the *château* flies a triumphant flag, with the chatelaine standing at the door, awaiting the return of the vulpicide.

Luckily the keeper has produced a sister effort; it serves instead as a mural accompaniment to a *diplôme d'honneur* from the Fishing Club de France for being the best otter-killer in that district (this must have been before the days of the Pourville otter-hounds, which were the terror of the local water-rats) and to the inevitable photographs of grandchildren sprawling on



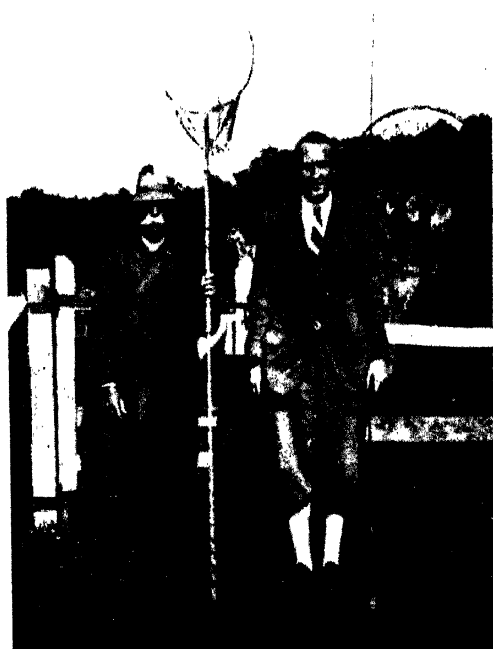
FROM A COLLECTION OF OLD SPORTING PRINTS, ORIGINALLY IN
THE MILL HOUSE, ENVERMEU, AND NOW THE PROPERTY OF
COLONEL THE HON. F. C. CRIPPS.



LILY-MAUD. PARIS, 1917.



COMTE JEAN DE BRETHUIL'S MILL-HOUSE, ENVERMEU.



sofas and of the keeper as a *poilu* in his younger days. It shows the death of a wild boar, and I only hope the Duke of Westminster may one day see this picture and learn a method of *la chasse* which would be quite new to him.

The central figure in the picture carries a huge spear at the ready, prior to giving the *coup de grâce* to an animal which is the size of a moose and looks like an enlarged hedgehog. It appears frightened, but not nearly so frightened as the bearded gentleman who is about to kill it, or as the hounds which are gingerly biting its tail. In the background as usual waits the trusty friend with a double-barrelled rifle, ready to assist in case of the emergency which seems imminent.

In the kitchen next door the keeper and his wife are finishing up their meal; so is the small boy enlisted from the village to carry my bag and net. Judging by his appetite his mother cannot have fed him very well before he left home, and he now has that *gonflé* appearance often the prelude to slight sickness. I need scarcely add that when I set out on this lovely stream it was not long before I discovered:

1. That the weather was too bright.
2. That I should have been there the day before, when there was a wonderful hatch of fly.
3. That the water was low and that rain was badly needed.
4. That the trout were already gorged with mayfly.

So I put my tackle and the small boy in the car (the little brat was sick) and motored across to the next valley to a river where I knew I should get fish, sun or no sun, mayfly or no mayfly.

For I have a friend, M. Plantard, who is a cheesemaker, specialising in Camemberts and Excelsiors. Above his cheesery the river is as clear as crystal, perfect dryfly water, and below it—well, it is just like pea-soup, due to the fragments of cheese which float down. The trout live on this, and average over two pounds, whereas above the cheesery they are only half a pound.

I had one of the most entertaining fishing days and was initiated into the mysteries of “cheesing”; it is remarkably difficult, with no reel and just a light, long, bamboo rod and strong gut. We got five fish (average, $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb.), broke three bamboo tops, and lost five casts.

The evenings in Dieppe are very quiet, though one must admit that an officers' ball given at the Métropole could have taught lessons in brightness to some of our extension nights. It started off rather formally, but the drawing of the tombola (in which the Duke of Westminster, who was there with Major Basil Kerr, won the first of twenty-eight prizes in the form of three magnums of champagne) started off the gaiety. Streamers were flung at the Norman beauties, who were headed by the daughter of the Colonel of the regiment, and Mr. Guy Farquhar, who had, for once, failed to catch any trout that day, certainly did not fail to elicit great applause for his Hawaiian dance, festooned with yards of coloured paper.

The Channel steamer *Paris* is hooting in the harbour, so I suppose the time has come for a last plate of winkles, a *Byrrh sec et frappé*, and a prayer that somebody will salve and wash that car in the morning.

DIEPPE

August

PERHAPS MY THOUGHTS might be more accurately divined if I had said "Dieppe—for Deauville," as announced on railway stations. The two places may be one hundred miles apart, yet by a judicious use of the night service from Newhaven I am enabled to keep my annual appointment with the *sauterelles*, those lithe little grasshoppers so beloved by the trout of Normandy.

But, of course, bad weather has put them back a bout a fortnight, and they are sensibly remaining concealed in the grass instead of hopping into the river.

The Normandy trout streams are fishing very well just now. The mayfly season being long over, the trout are hungry again; during the day, however hot the weather, one can take advantage of the *saison de sauterelles* and have a vast amount of sport with grasshoppers as lures. I can assure anglers not conversant with this method of fishing that it is just as hard as up-stream worming. The grasshopper season starts about 14th July, appropriately with the great French national holiday.

Again did I visit my friendly maker of Camembert cheese and sallied forth with a bamboo rod to get two-pounders, all grown so fat from the curds and whey. But cheesed I never so wisely I could not move a fish this time. Of course I had my excuse—the water was too clear, and not nearly full enough of cheese-like substances. So instead of trout I brought away some Camemberts in my fishing-basket, with orders to eat

them in ten days' time and never to keep them on ice—one should only do that with cream cheeses.

To-day French horns are tooting, maritime bands are marching up and down the marine parade, little boys are flying kites, heads are bobbing about in the sea beyond the bathing huts, fishing smacks are doing the same far out to sea, fishing nets garland the streets, the sun is shining, and there is a nice sea breeze. Dieppe is enjoying its *Fêtes de la Mer*. The Archbishop has this morning blessed the harbour, the ships, and the day's catch of fish.

Meanwhile I enjoy sitting in the porch of the Métropole Hotel before luncheon, with a dish of winkles and an *apéritif*, sniffing the strong and healthy odour of seaweed, and watching those peculiar French dogs taking their morning run—white, with fox-like faces, sharp-pointed ears, and bells round their necks. The winkles are boiled for ten minutes in water very much seasoned with red pepper and two sorts of black pepper, and are then left to soak for ten more minutes: I hope Lord Charles Cavendish will note this, for he is a veritable winkle connoisseur.

But to-day I must eat at the Swan Hotel, Tôtes, on my way through to Deauville by the Caudebec ferry over the Seine. It was on this ferry that once I had cause to remember the advice given me by a famous Frenchman: "If in trouble with any French authorities, do not try to argue in French, *shout* in English." I had trouble; a French car and mine went too quickly on to the ferry. The ferryman swore at him; he swore back. They swore at me, and sent for gendarmes on arrival at the other side. The Frenchman argued; I shouted. That Frenchman is probably still in Caudebec gendarmerie.

I have never had a meal at the famous Swan Hotel, but my book of the *Club des Sans-Club* tells me that it has been good enough in the past for D'Artagnan, Flaubert, Maupassant, and La Pompadour, so I feel that I shall be in the company of some distinguished shades.

The *Club des Sans-Club* is most useful. You can buy a book each year for 20 francs, and it tells you all the best hotels and restaurants in France. You write your name on a card on the cover of the book, and you are a member. Any time that you go to a restaurant, proudly show your book, and you will have the best attention at the lowest prices. For if you report to the Club headquarters in Paris any place on its list for irregularity, and your claim is substantiated, the place gets a bad mark.

Yesterday I motored down to Amiens and district. The reborn "devastated areas" round Saint-Quentin Cambrai, and Arras look like a series of rather pathetic dolls' villages, all perched up on hills.

And Amiens is now a quietly prosperous provincial city, not that whirling kaleidoscope of humanity as known by those who were in the Somme battles, who would look upon the Rue des Trois Cailloux as though it were Bond Street. The Salles Godbert, where more champagne was drunk than in any place during the war, seemed just peopled with ghosts, a shadow of its former self.

The patron's daughter inquired of former habitués. "Le majeur Orpen?" she asked. When I told her that he was dead she sat in a corner for a long time, nodding her head slowly. "Orps," as Sir William Orpen was always known, was a great character in Amiens. But I was able to tell her that his friend "Tuppenny" Lee was flourishing.

Colonel A. N. Lee is now one of the chief directors of Walker & Hall, the Sheffield silver-plating firm.

Lord Portarlington paused here for an hour on his way to Deauville. He recalled the occasion, over twenty years ago, when the Mayors of the Cinque Ports were being entertained in Dieppe by the French Navy. Borrowing the wine waiter's chain of office, Lord Portarlington approached the banquet and was hailed as chief speech-maker. He addressed the meeting in such voluble but obviously unintelligible French that the *Entente cordiale* shivered in its shoes, and an exchange of Notes nearly became necessary.

Another gay member of the party threw a piece of soap from the balcony of the hotel, hitting an Admiral in the back as he strolled down the street followed by naval ratings. "*Assassins!*" shouted the Admiral. "*Non, non, seulement le savon,*" observed the ratings, as they picked up the soap.

And I have seen two more familiar faces on the front, Mr. Rex Colclough and Mr. Philip Kindersley, just setting off by car to Cognac to stay with Mr. Freddie Hennessy, which sounds as though they may get a glass or two of brandy if they are lucky.

Thirty years ago, before the days of Le Touquet and Deauville, Dieppe was the queen of the North of France's watering-places; now she is decidedly reduced to the rank of dowager. Yet even if only the memory of great names (such as graced her queenly days) lingers around the Boulevard de Verdun, there remain a few to please a Marcel Proust. The Bérard family still lives at the *Château* of Graincourt; on the golf-links and at the Ferme du Pré Saint-Nicholas you will hear the names Caraman Chimay, Kergorlay, Polignac, Jaucourt—all

P.S. I am sorry I cannot meet today as I am in this dreadful (?) city. I hope to be back about the 9th of July - and I should very much like to go to the club with you first - if it is possible for you to manage it - as I'm in a nervous sort of A.S.S.



My dear P.S.O. you have been very kind and good and I am very grateful. And it was charming of you to write to me - I feel I deserve to be "Butted" not "Bucked".
Ever Thine orps.
Paris 14th June 1924.

LETTER TO THE AUTHOR FROM SIR WILLIAM ORPEN ON BEING ELECTED TO BUCK'S CLUB.



E. I. ROWAT, PRINCE AND PRINCESS LYAN DE CARAMAN CHIMAY AND
MARQUIS DE JUCOURT.



LORD PORTARLINGTON
AND MRS. EDWARD
DE WINTON WILLS.

"*très Faubourg*." But the artistic colony boasts no Renoir, Monet, Degas, Debussy, Saint-Saëns, Beardsley, Wilde, Whistler or Sargent, though the shadows of Sickert and Jacques-Emile Blanche in their old age still haunt Offranville. Are no artistic giants now born to stalk through life as did these?

Philip Page, that delightful classically-minded writer who breathes the spirit of these great figures, slips over the Channel sometimes for a short stay in the Hôtel Aguado, and disappears like Renoir on a Saturday to the market, searching for shrimps, lobster claws and choice fish. We can both still find our little scraps of Arcady in Dieppe.

IN SEARCH OF SPORT
WITH INTERLUDES

Number Two

GERMANY

BADEN-BADEN

August

PIGEONS ARE FEEDING on a bright and sunny cornfield; the farmer appears, carrying a gun. He does not fire it, but the sight of it scares the pigeons and they fly away. Some, mostly the foreigners, fly far away: those which are locally bred hover about, ready to settle again when the danger is past. After a short interval they flutter down, finding that all is peaceful, and, following their example, the foreigners return. There is life and activity once more in the sunny cornfield.

With this Virgilian simile (and one must admit that the great poet himself would have presented it better), one may describe the present state of Baden-Baden. The luxury world of this country has, of necessity, in the past few years had an unsteady time: those who have maintained and supported it are seeing their efforts crowned with success.

"The good old days" of Baden-Baden recall processions of kings, minor kings and other royalty which thronged the place in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras; French and Russian nobility especially made the most lavish display.

There is a florid description of life here in the 'seventies by Ouida in *Under Two Flags*; the pages bristle with brilliance, glory, grand dukes and princesses. And if you look upstairs in the corridors of the Stephanie-Brenner Hotel (in those days it was the Stephanie-Bauer, just before the Brenner family acquired it) you will see all the

prints of those old days. And downstairs in its cellars lie many bottles of forty-years-old *Kümmel*, and you pay no more than for the ordinary *Kirsch*, *Mirabelle*, or *Himbergeist*.

In this Schwarzwald is a life of calm contentment, to which is added in the last fortnight of August, for those who wish to take part in it, a social round which would test the constitution of a hardened second-season débutante. As the sun sets over this trim little town, one looks up at the pine-clad mountains above it, in the villages of which the goodly German housewives will be collecting their children within the doors.

For after sun-down the Erl-King, who reigns in the Black Forest, has the power to lure little children to their doom, with his insinuating promises of lovely presents and treats. And he rules over the elves and goblins, who, judging by Liszt's concert study *Gnomensreigen*, must employ a piper of incredible breathing powers.

More mundane specialities of the district are cuckoo-clocks, a proximity to the Rhine which ensures the best hocks, *Kirsch*, which is good, cheap, and recommended by doctors, and taxi-cabs which charge only 1s. for a flag-fall.

The industry of making cuckoo-clocks is fast dying out, so Thoma, who sells them in the Arcade here, tells us. They have to send somebody late in the evening up to a funny little log hut high up in the mountains, to find the old cuckoo-clock-maker when he returns from the forest. They say this particular old boy is almost the last of his trade: he is only about 4 feet high, has a long grey beard, is 77 years old, and looks just like a kindly gnome. He spends all his days in the forest,

cutting wood and listening for the sound of cuckoos calling so as to imitate them exactly in his clocks. Herr Hitler has one in his mountain home at Berchtesgaden: I have bought its brother to take home.

Let us assume that your primary reason for a visit to Baden is one of health. You need not necessarily be in bad health, but even the best motor-cars should sometimes undergo an overhaul. General conversation is such that would have shocked our grandmothers: in their days you were only allowed to mention a headache in public. Here somebody will greet another with: "Have you had your hose this morning?" for this is the day's big moment in the slimming cure. Most people come to slim, to put on weight, or for rheumatism.

It is rather like going back to school again; you can go to Dengler's at his famous slimming sanatorium on the hill overlooking the town, or to Schacht's, which entails a lighter course down at one of the hotels which are bordered by the little river Oos. Rivalry between the teams is limited to a discussion of ailments in the Stephanie-Brenner bar, usually terminated by one of Dr. Dengler's "young ladies" exclaiming: "Oh, I must go home to bed: matron will be so angry—it is nine o'clock." For early school at Dengler's (Schacht's are excused it) is strenuous, with a wander up the mountain-side almost at dawn, and probably a run back down it to breakfast.

Conversely to school, the illustrious ones are wakened first: Lord Rothermere, for example, is hustled up at 6 a.m., whereas if you arrive there unheralded, unloved and unsung you may sleep till about seven. Dengler's have very strict rules: an English Viscountess "got the sack" one year, and Mr. Emerson Bainbridge was almost

"requested" because he had bought a big white dog. Models of good behaviour always are Lady Dunn, Mrs. Hugh McCorquodale (Barbara Cartland—she easily finishes a novel in the three weeks' treatment), Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mills, Mrs. Julie Thompson and dear Tullio Carminati, the darling of the place. "Give us a singing lesson, please," the ladies cry to him, picturing themselves in Grace Moore's shoes in *One Night of Love*.

Not only should you follow Dr. Dengler's advice on medical subjects: on the racecourse, too, he is infallible, and you are sure to make your expenses if you watch his wagers, a quite simple plan on this racecourse. The racing is very good: one can term the meeting (it usually takes place in the third week in August) a miniature Goodwood. Admission to the Club Enclosure can be obtained only through a member of the German Jockey Club, known as the Union Club; in pre-war days it was a little Ascot, with processions of carriages driving up the course, and pomp and precedence well to the fore.

The Queen of Baden-Baden is Frau von Haniel, and at her house are given the best parties of the week. One will meet there members of the Government, and her entertaining is on a scale of lavishness without gaudiness which might well be copied by some of our own hostesses.

You are sure to see Mrs. Ronald Greville (a great devotee of Baden), Prince Hatzfeld, who is president of the Baden International Club (a small edition of the Jockey Club Rooms at Newmarket), also Baron Rupprecht Bocklin, who was at Aldershot in the summer before the war attached to a Scottish regiment, and had the unhappiness of seeing them fight against his German battalion a few months later—a fine sportsman, who has

his own whisky distillery, the contents of which I can well recommend.

Herr von Tschammer und Osten, the *Reich Sports Chief* of Germany, is one of the principal guests at Frau Haniel's parties. He has been to England several times with German football teams, and those who have heard him speak at the various functions will realise that he is a man of outstanding ability, besides possessing extremely good looks; he greets one with his left hand, for his right was permanently injured in the war.

The post of *Reichssportsführer* was created by Herr Hitler so that one man might be responsible for the organisation of the nation's physical fitness and outdoor sports, and to represent the Government at all big sporting functions. Athletics, football, gymnastics and Swedish drill, winter sports, bicycling and horse-racing come under his supervision: all these have increased their adherents by a hundred per cent in the last five years.

I wonder what would be the effect of a Sports Chief in England, and whom one would suggest for the post? The Committee of the M.C.C. would have a lot of responsibility taken off their hands, such as the drafting of telegrams to Australia. The Jockey Club, too, would have to acknowledge a superior entity, and the Royal Yacht Squadron might even find themselves forced to elect some younger members.

For this *grande semaine* tail-coats and white ties are absolutely necessary, which is most unusual these days anywhere on the Continent. I have trailed mine about Europe for years, and have used them very few times—apart from Government functions and for opera *premières* in Milan and Rome.

The only casino in Germany is in Baden: it is not very big (at least, not the *salle privée*), but the result is just the same, especially if you favour red at roulette. For you are in the Schwarzwald ("Black Forest"), and it is as well to remember that this colour seems to dominate the roulette wheel.

Sir George Tilley's daughter Yvonne owes me gratitude for persuading her father, the life President and Chairman of the Pearl Assurance Company to release on temporary loan, for her use in the Casino, one pound of the Company's hundred million pounds of assets, duly converted into 21 marks at tourist rate of exchange; the Tilley family are at school at Schacht's, so are allowed their evenings in the Casino. Sir George has all the characteristics of the really great men of business—he is homely, has a great sense of humour, is easy to approach, works hard and unobtrusively in the cause of charity, and is helpful to the younger generation. By contrast I have found that it is the men who are in the second eleven of finance who are hard and "tough," give themselves airs, and treat anybody not so wealthy as themselves with a Pharisaical, supercilious disdain. "How clever I am!" they seem to say to themselves.

The Pearl Assurance building in Holborn is stately and imposing, and the Chairman of the Directors (Sir George has held this office for twelve years, been a director for twenty-two, and fifty altogether with the Company) sits in a magnificent room; yet when you visit him he casts insurance cares aside and will tell you of his 324-ton yacht *Orion*, or how much he is looking forward to *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden. And in will come his vice-Chairman, Mr. John Pierce (forty-seven years with the Company, a charming and kindly

personality, too), and they will tell you stories of early days forty years ago when they were Company Superintendents, clad in frock-coats, top-hats and large watch-chains with fobs. Not a soul is elected to that Board of Directors unless he has graduated from the lowest rung of the Pearl's ladder.

Such men when they travel abroad stabilise the foreigner's impression of English business solidity: the cosmopolitan, professional loafer gives the reverse effect.

I am wondering when will appear the reminiscences of Mr. Cecil Hayes, who takes his wife's dog for a walk in the gardens while she is at the baths, and whose spectacular career at the bar was established in the case of Mrs. Bamberger. He says he is busy writing them and that they are to be called *The Whole Truth*. I know that there is a grand story of Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha's big win at roulette, a plucky, well-deserved coup on the part of our War Minister. "The Professor," as Mr. Hayes is called, practically gave up the Bar to be extra legal adviser to the Duke of Westminster. He is a cheery conversationalist; so, too, is Major Jack Paget, who has a lovely wife, lovely daughters and lovely nieces, known always as the Paget twins.

And Uncle Jack, as they all call him (and their pretty girl friends, too), can be seen each evening here returning from the *thé dansant* at the big tea-shop in the town, always accompanied by a new *Fräulein*, to whom he introduces us all in the Stephanie Bar. Uncle Jack can speak no German, neither are Sir George Tilley and I too proficient in the language, so conversation flags occasionally. However, the gallant Major, after screwing his eyeglass firmly in for a better inspection, will at once start to read her hand, which livens things up

considerably, and will usually persuade her to change her diet for one of nuts.

At Christmas I always receive a copy of the *Vegetarian News*, and in July an invitation to bathe with Mr. Cochran's Young Ladies in Uncle Jack's swimming-pool at his house, Ibstock Place, Roehampton. Certainly he and Lord Decies maintain all the old-world courtesies in their attitude towards the fair sex.

I enjoyed some of the best rainbow-trout fishing I have ever had in the Black Forest streams in the direction of Wildbad: moreover, the trout (unlike most rainbows, which are only fit to cook *au bleu*) are remarkably good to eat. For fishing in the Black Forest I can best recommend anglers to apply direct to the municipal authorities at Baden, for you have to have a licence before fishing anywhere.

ONE FAMOUS
HOSTESS GREET
ANOTHER—
FRAU HANIEL
OF BADEN-BADEN
WELCOMES THE
HON. MRS. RONALD
GREVILLE OF
POLESDEN LACY.



THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
PEARL ASSURANCE
COMPANY, SIR GEORGE
TILLEY, WITH LADY
TILLEY AND
MISS YVONNE TILLEY
AT BADEN-BADEN.

MRS. CHARLES MILLS, MR. CHARLES
MILLS, MRS. JULIE THOMPSON,
AND MRS. E. H. TATTERSALL,
AT BADEN-BADEN RACES.





GENERAL-FELD-MARSCHALL GÖRING TAKES AIM, UNDER THE EYE OF
HIS CHIEF FORESTER SCHIERPING.



SPORTS CHIEF
VON TSCHAMMER
UND OSTEN
GREET'S THE
AUTHOR AT
BADEN-BADEN RACES.

BERLIN

November

AT LAST I have shot my first fox, a lovely specimen, in the presence of General Feld-Marschall Göring's *Oberstjägermeister* ("Chief Forester") Scherping: it was on a cinema, running nice and slowly, and a light showed that I had drilled it through the head. At that moment I was thinking how much rather I would have shot one of the General's real stags (he has some wizards harboured up in East Prussia), when the Chief Forester extended his congratulations and an invitation to shoot on the General's Schofheide estate, about two hours away from Berlin. And I had to decline, for the clothes I had with me were only suitable for the Eden Bar—and you know what the General looks like when dressed for *la chasse*.

One cannot be surprised to hear that there has been a stir in hunting circles in Valhalla: Nimrod, Allan Quatermain and Longfellow's braves are prepared to resign the title of " Mightiest Hunter" to General Göring: on his present form the General deserves every sportsman's admiration as a true hunter. He has shot some magnificent heads, especially of red deer; he has the best game preserves in Germany, and who can blame him for keeping them for himself and his guests? We all know the gamekeeper who tells us: "Squire won't let no one in Long Wood till May is out." That is how game has been preserved in England. *Auceps et venator ille!*—let's say of him, noting the exclamation mark so

dear to the German language. Hunting and shooting are his passions, just as with our military, retired, active or otherwise.

I never saw the International Trophy Exhibition in Vienna in 1910, but I am thankful to have seen that at Berlin in 1937. Passing through such a mammoth exhibition, the kaleidoscope cannot be other than thought-suggesting. Those huge elk-heads, for instance, tell me Swedish legends of the great pre-glacial forests and of marshes where swam those sinister black swans of Tuonela, janitor of the portals of Death.

The great ivory tusks, 180 and 186 pounds in weight, given by the Aga Khan to King George V at once conjure up a picture of the immense, dim, elephant-haunted forests which clothe the flanks of Kilimanjaro in Tanganyika. For here lived the "Crown Prince," the name given by the natives to the king of all elephants. He was treated as a god by the Wandorobos, a queer savage native tribe that lives in trees. Only one hunter is ever said to have approached him; it was the Duke of Windsor. The elephant got away, and later the natives, fearing that he would fall a victim to human hands, shot him with poisoned arrows and buried him.

They said he was between three and four hundred years old, and that his tusks weighed about 180 lb. each. In 1931 I heard this story from the station-master at Arusha, sitting under the slopes of the mountain: you can believe it or not.

Most of us picture roaring lions, snarling tigers, growling grizzlies and charging elephants as the supreme trophies of big-game-hunting. In decess they make fine furniture for mansions like Barchester Towers; "Rawal Pindi," Marina Drive, Boscombe, is equally happy to

house them to greet the guests when they congregate for the summer holidays.

Yet fearsome and dangerous as are these animals, they have very little significance to the expert hunter; he treats them like you would toy with your roll and butter at a restaurant, when waiting for the courses to appear. Sheep and goats (not those you can see in the fields but the mountain variety with twirly horns) are his caviare, a luxury he certainly does not enjoy when he is hunting them.

Look at one of those wild goats, called Tien Shan ibexes, and think what Colonel John O'Rourke had to do to get them. A journey to the Pamir Plateau through Russian Turkestan is no picnic at any time—now it is an impossibility. A couple of native bearers as companions, intense cold, chocolate and dried food for all meals, flea-bags for bed for a month or two, and all he gets, you may say, is a goat. But what a goat in the eyes of the world of hunters! And if you have bagged a Marco Polo Argali, a sheep resident on the Pamir Plateau, your name takes its place automatically in camp-fire conversations.

There is one hunter whom all envy, Captain Henry Brocklehurst, for many years Game Warden of the Sudan. He has shot the most inaccessible animal in the world, the giant Panda, in the Sze-Chuan district (if you know where that is). The giant Panda looks like a black-and-white bear, and happens to be of the racoon family—quite a harmless animal. There are plenty of little Pandas, but only one giant has ever been shot. Captain Brocklehurst is the F. C. Selous type of hunter (the original of Allan Quatermain)—hardy, courageous, and actually enjoying iron rations and the solitude enforced by such expeditions.

See that black-maned lion, and think of a still, cool African night, the air alive with the noise of a thousand crickets, the long watch in a thorn-protected hide (called a "boma") waiting for the deep, muffled "wumph" (lions do not roar much except in captivity), which tells us that the dead, smelly zebra has lured a victim.

One flash with your torch and simultaneously one shot for you should not miss at 10 yards range, then to sleep if the mosquitoes permit. And no move out of your *boma* till dawn, for lions bring one or two friends with them to help in case of casualties.

There sits a capercailzie, that enormous bird nearly as large as a turkey, with a big fan-tail. (You can see one outside the Austrian Restaurant in Piccadilly.) And he is the wariest of birds in spite of his size, but at this moment he is blind and oblivious to the world. It is the month of April and he is trilling away a wild song to a hen; the blindness is that of love, when all else is forgotten. At any other time his keen ear would have detected the swift footfall of an approaching marksman, who makes up his ground like an advancing infantryman, pausing the instant the bird ceases to sing. The little song only lasts for about fifteen seconds at a time, then stops suddenly, and the singer becomes doubly acute to enemy sounds.

It is no good: the marksman is already under the tree, the capercailzie sings his song, the gun is levelled, and that is the end. (*I did not fire. The stalk was enough.*)

My own efforts in the safari world are as those of Smith Minimus in the Lower Third. A moose in the Province of Quebec (you might as well fire a charge at your cows in the backyard for the danger involved),

some lions in Kenya, shot from a tree nicely protected by thorn bushes (the only barrier a lion will not face) and a buffalo heading the list. After some fruitless efforts in search of buffalo I was handed over to the care of Baron von Blixen, the king of white hunters.

My diary reads: Even my small experience taught me that here was a master-hand: on this occasion there would be no errors of judgment. Buffalo tracks were found. Nothing to do but wait till they came out in the evening into the rushes of the swamp. Two natives sit all day perched on a rod on the escarpment. They descend, inscrutable-faced, to tell "Blix" the buffaloes are in the swamp. The failing light, the thick black form twisting itself out of a scrub of reeds like a caterpillar: a long look down the shaking foresight: the sharp snap of a .275 Mauser.

The buffalo drops, quivering like a stricken boxer: he's up again and away. A deeper roar from "Blix's" .416 Mannlicher: down he goes for good. It's dark, he's gasping out his life in the reeds—not safe to try to find him till the honey-bird wakes us at dawn. Then a large brandy and ginger ale, a photograph in the misty light, and up the escarpment to the camp.

"Blix" touches my shoulder. "Look there!" he points. One hundred and fifty miles away Kilimanjaro's white peaks sit perched in the pinkiness of an African dawn. There's so much more in hunting than just the shot that kills.

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Bowing the head to Baedeker, I surrender you to him for a complete and instructive survey of Berlin's Art Galleries, museums, libraries, zoo, public buildings

and lime-treed *Strassen*. The morning is the time when our receptive faculties are alert and eager for learning: my matutinal activities are usually limited (a regrettable habit in Continental cities) to a port fillip in the Esplanade bar at noon. Therefore, all that I have to offer is a glimpse at the Mayfair area of Berlin, where there is still a section which lines to tinkle coronets in the conversation.

To crown the strenuous morning already indicated, you may stroll by Tiergartenstrasse, the local Park Lane, then perhaps do a little shopping in the Kurfürstendamm, which rather corresponds to Regent Street, or in the Unter den Linden, which had a decided flavour of Bond Street and the Champs-Élysées. The Unter den Linden is probably the more convenient street, as you may be lunching at the Bristol, I expect, in which case you will be in exactly the same atmosphere as at the Savoy Grill. If you feed at Horcher's (he has now opened a branch in Old Burlington Street) you may find yourself snoozing most of the afternoon, for the food, though excellent, is rather heavy.

In the hotel world of Berlin you can liken the Kaiserhof to Claridge's, the Adlon to the Ritz, and the Esplanade to the Dorchester, which is appropriate as it is also under the direction of M. Anton Bon. For the afternoon I must hand you over to Baedeker, and return to take charge of you at that supreme hour of the day, cocktail time.

Unless you are invited to such a party, of which there are plenty each evening, the local rally is at the Eden Bar. If you are in Berlin you are sure to gravitate there, if only to learn, in true Mayfair style, "if there is anybody about." That pretty girl whom you admired so much the previous night at the Quartier Latin is bound to turn

up fairly soon; but I must leave you to return to the Esplanade, to dress and dine before going to the opera.

Evening dress is not obligatory by any means in the Opera House, and you would not term the audience "smart" in the Covent Garden sense, except when the great Furtwängler is conducting.

The State Opera Orchestra is quite a different body from the Berlin Philharmonic, of which the leading instrumentalists are all young men. In the State Orchestra promotion is by seniority: it plays Wagner magnificently, with its heart, body and soul breathing the spirit of the music. I heard *Madame Butterfly*, which was not so good: the orchestral playing was as ponderous as if you were using a tennis racket in a squash court. On each occasion it missed the mysterious tenderness with which Puccini invests the entry of the heroine's themes. And I went especially to hear the Danish tenor Roswaenge: he was absent for this performance.

Sir Thomas Beecham, staying in Berlin to record *The Magic Flute* with the Berlin Philharmonic, had advised me to hear him. Every morning across the courtyard of the Esplanade I could hear tenors, baritones, sopranos and mezzos in turn: it was Sir Thomas and Mr. Walter Legge holding auditions for the summer season's singers at Covent Garden.

Sir Thomas has the neatest wit, apart from his genius as a conductor. Recently he was invited to give a lecture tour in America on general subjects, to which a friend queried, "And what will you lecture to them about?" "Oh," replied Sir Thomas, "anything from Plato to Pluto."

I am sorry I did not have the chance to go to the German Opera House, which is under the management

of the *Reich* Propaganda Minister, Dr. Goebbels—the *Staatsoper* is under the control of General-Feld-Marschall Göring. The chief director of the German Opera House is the famous baritone Rhode, and one of the great features is the performance of the Ballet, which has not only made a big name for itself in Germany but in Paris at the World Exhibition.

After the opera or theatre (the standard of acting is very high), should you have a partner you will make for one of these night-clubs—Quartier Latin, Le Jockey, or *Ciro's*. Here you will see all those who were earlier in the evening at the Eden Bar or at any private party you may have attended. There is dancing, no cabaret, and the quality of the spirit in the liquor is not very forcible: it is better to drink Hocks and Moselles.

Three nights a week there is dancing at the Esplanade, with white ties and tail-coats: this is very pleasant, for it is held in a fine airy restaurant, and the band is excellent, especially in its programme of classical music earlier in the evening. Here it is that the smart Berliners assemble when entertaining out of their own houses.

If you want a "bachelor party," the place to go to is *Femina*, a huge night-club rather like the London Casino, with telephones on each table, so that you can ring up any dancing partner whom you may fancy. The angry expression on the face of their temporary escort will often atone for the refusal of your Terpsichorean offer.

Rio Rita is another place of the same type, only much smaller: here is a collection of lovely barmaids, who will leave their posts to dance with you. Do not expect to find that they have much intelligence allied to their beauty. "And too often, among the thoughts in the

loveliest heads, we come on nests of woolly caterpillars.”

K.L.M. air line run a fine service to Berlin—four and a half hours in the air at 9,000 feet over the top of fog, rain, wind, and other wintry unpleasantnesses. It is not much fun owling about in the dusk of gloomy winter days, but it is all right at that height. It was like a summer evening over the Alps when I flew back on a murky evening.

IN SEARCH OF SPORT
WITH INTERLUDES

Number Three

AUSTRIA

SALZBURG

August

FROM THE BALCONY on which I am sitting the town of Salzburg is not visible: only the Bavarian Alps in the nearish distance and the Untersberg mountain looming over us can catch the eye. This Schloss Aigen is taken every year by distinguished visitors, who entertain in the traditional festival style: it is no huge mansion, but a very comfortable country house, reflecting the spirit of my host, Mr. Sidney Beer. The star selection in the way of castles is Leopoldskron, the Rococo residence of Max Reinhardt, presided over, in his absence, by his Oberlieutenant Kommer, who knows everything that is ever whispered in the Salzkammergut.

And his acquaintanceships move in a mysterious way: some days you may find yourself well up in his visiting list, on others you are not marked at all. I think it depends on how he rates you in International Society, with the added thought of your value to Salzburg.

Our Salzburgian panorama must comprise the fortress castle which dominates the city, the broad, swift-flowing, muddy-looking river, the background of mountains, the cathedral, the *Mozarteum*, the *Festspielhaus*, the local dress, the hotels, the *Kaffee-Bazar*, the police, and the weather, with the Musical Festival as a shimmering background, aided by a permanent *obbligato* of musical murmurings.

Often this is in the form of a discourse by those who know their subject, but more often are heard strings of ecstatic superlatives from those who don't.

It was on the slopes of the Untersberg mountain where lived the original Bluebeard, a woodcutter. Whether he was proficient or not at his trade, fable does not relate; there are fifteen graves in a row in the churchyard, all said to be attributable to his prowess with the axe. I do not think the Salzburg C.I.D. can have been in good form in those days; they are certainly quite bright and rather officious just now, though for efficiency in handling traffic their police should take a few lessons in London.

The hotels are good, and not cheap during the festival; also they are apt to shift you out for two or three days with no warning at all. But the music atones for any little inconveniences: all such are forgotten in the *Festspielhaus*, especially when such a giant as Toscanini is there. I heard a performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony which was terrific, and invested with an almost demoniacal intensity that the whole air seemed to be filled with electricity.

And two hours after the concert there blew from the mountains a sudden raging storm of wind which shook the town and stopped as suddenly. Superstitious ones were sure that *something* had been stirred up in the ether. I am beginning to sympathise with the generation which says, "But I heard . . .," for one day I know that I shall say, "But I heard Toscanini at Salzburg."

The genius of Toscanini, who can be safely called the greatest living musician, is at its best in rehearsals. When a passage does not satisfy him, he sings it over to the players, and you hear it on repetition gradually coming to his standard of perfection. He talks to an orchestra in English, American, German and Italian: naturally *ecco* and *bene* abound. When he gets angry he stamps his

feet preparatory to delivering judgment: on one occasion I noticed that he paused as if to count, and then quietly made a gesture of sad acquiescence.

The manner in which orchestras play under his guidance is as though an electric battery had been placed under the platform. Even at rehearsals Toscanini's nervous force fills the whole hall. I do not believe that there are many bad orchestras: there are good and bad conductors, and I am sure that if Toscanini rehearsed a military band on the end of a pier playing the overture to *Zampa*, he would get the performance that he required from it.

The best guide to this place is Count Ferdinand Czernin's book, *This Salzburg*. He is a brother of Count Hans Czernin (of "Hans" and "Pantz" fame), and the last time I saw him was driving off on an ox-wagon from Lord Lovelace's farm at Babati, Tanganyika. He was leaving behind him an unhappy marriage, since which he has recovered his keen sense of humour and married a very charming wife.

In his book he warns you that: "We Austrian boys always make love to a girl in a taxi. Why I don't know." Nor do I, for it is the worst technique in the world, at least as far as English girls are concerned, besides being bad manners to poor Cupid.

And I must add that I have yet to find those "fiery Austrian men" and "fast Viennese girls." The men usually seem quiet and very charming, if not very ambitious. As for the girls, one can heartily endorse Czernin's: "We Austrian girls are not half as fast as we look, and are inclined to take love seriously."

Generally speaking, I have not seen a plethora of Austrian beauty, notable exceptions always being Princess

Franz Weikersheim and Princess Ulrich Kinsky. And there is no more attractive figure than the latter in Austrian national dress.

I saw her in a coat and skirt of dark grey wool (which was rainproof) with green facings, and a hat which, to me, was the winner. It was one of those light green-and-red ones typical of the country, and carried on it:

1. A chamois' beard. (This is a superior fitting to the inevitable feather, and the chamois should have been shot by the wearer, as in this case. "*Gams-Bart*" is its national name.)
2. Stag's teeth.
3. A miniature stag's head.
4. A trumpet, as used by the keepers.
5. A badge of St. Christopher.
6. A barometer.
7. A blue flower.
8. A model of a black spaniel.

And yet there was no overcrowding.

* * * *

Previously I had always located The White Horse Inn as "somewhere in Austria" or on the stage of the Coliseum. Having recently lunched there, I am now in a position to tell you that it is situated on the lake of St. Wolfgang, in the Salzburg Alps, about an hour and a half away, by car, from Salzburg itself. The top end of the lake at Strobl provides the Austrians with a local Lido; life there is very much the same as it is at Frinton, except that the season lasts longer.

Strobl society pays more attention to priority, precedence and rank than does Salzburg, which caters for

all classes of visitor. Strobl will show itself at Salzburg for a Toscanini concert or possibly for Bruno Walter doing *Tristan und Isolde*, but it is quite past the stage of going to the Serenades.

Farther up the valley from Strobl is Ischl, where the old Emperor Francis Joseph had his chamois lodges. There is a fine monument to him, kept up by the local guides, with whom he was a great favourite.

The best fishing open to the public of which I know in Austria is at Gmunden, where the trout run to seven and eight pounds, providing grand sport in a fast-running, rocky river. In the lakes the fish run up to twenty-five and thirty pounds; there is only one sure way to catch them—in a net. If you can ever get a day on the property of Herr Stiassny, you will see, and possibly catch, some great trout. You may also see (although you, naturally, must not angle in this case) his lovely wife Gerda, who is always the centre of an admiring crowd of dukes and lords when she is having a cocktail in the foyer of the Ritz in London before luncheon.

In the Strobl area you are bound to find Prince Tassilo Fürstenberg, for here is his hunting-bureau, and as the chamois season is upon us he is anxious to fix you up for a shoot. Failing that, the next best thing he can do is to tell you all about it in his picturesque fashion:

“Owing to the geographical situation of Austria, which is three-quarters mountains, chamois-stalking has always been the greatest sport in that country; it dates from the sixteenth century, during the reign of Emperor Maximilian, one of the most popular Habsburgs.

“The chamois belongs to the antelope race, and is one of the hardiest animals in the world: one can easily say

they have to endure eight months of winter and only four months summer. They live in the highest parts of the mountains in herds, the bucks living by themselves in inaccessible, rocky, hidden-away corners of the big stone masses. As a trophy this beast has always been very much sought after owing to his hide, which is used for the national costume—the leather trousers. The hair which grows along the back is used as a decoration for the hat, and no mountaineer feels himself properly dressed after Mass on Sunday if he hasn't got a self-killed *Gams-Bart* on the back of his hat.

"The territory in which the chamois roam is mostly owned by large landowners or by the State. There are guards who protect the land, and every year many poachers and many keepers are killed in battle. It is quite a usual custom that when a young farmer becomes a keeper he will not hesitate a minute to fire on his own cousin or brother if he finds him poaching.

"After a two-hour climb with heavy nailed boots, you will find yourself away from the charms of International health resorts like Bad Ischl or Bad Gadstein and Salzburg, in practically untouched wilds.

"A small hut situated in a picturesque spot of the mountain from which you will get a wonderful view will serve you as a base camp; from there you will stalk the ridges and cliffs in which the chamois live. You start before the crack of dawn and must be in the haunts of the chamois when the sun gets up, especially in summer, as the chamois lie down about an hour after sunrise, and then are very difficult to see. A herd of chamois is always guarded by two or three old females: they stand in strategical points testing the wind, listening out for every noise, guarding the younger animals. At the

slightest noise you will hear a shrill whistle, which means 'Attention!' Once in 'attention' it only takes a part of a second to make the whole herd move, and with incredible leaps they disappear over the rocks to places where no human being can go.

"But if the wind is favourable you will be able to approach and have a good look round, and if lucky you may see, a couple of hundred yards away from the main herd, an old buck who is grazing and also benefiting by the watch of the old females. You then will take your aim with the help of a telescopic sight (the range at which you shoot is longer than in Scotland), for you want to be sure of killing your chamois, as if you wound you are likely never to see him again. After you have shot and you have got your chamois, and the keeper has eviscerated him (of which he carefully excludes the liver and the kidneys for himself), you sit down and see the view from your glasses, enjoying the beauties of the unrivalled mountain scenery, as well as the contents of your flask.

"After a cigarette or two you hear a shrill noise high up in the air—it will be the first raven approaching to eat the few remains. Towards nine o'clock you get back to the hut to have breakfast, and sleep until lunch. After lunch you will either go out for more chamois, or you will take the easier course and try to obtain a stag or roebuck.

"The keeper also serves you as cook and produces two or three national dishes which are very good, and consist mostly of flour, milk and a little fat, rather like pancakes. You will not see anybody except your keeper and an occasional woodcutter, and after two or three days of that life you will come down and enjoy things much more than you ever believed."

Let us wish Tassilo "*Waidmannsheil!*" or "Good hunting, old boy!" But you must never say this to a Pole. I once saw Prince Charles Radziwill nearly bound out of his *droshky* when, on his departure for an elk-hunt, a well-wisher uttered these words. It is better to wish them a couple of miss-fires.

I cannot remember whether Tassilo has ever taken Mrs. Corrigan for a chamois stalk. She is desperately keen to notch one of these animals, and has endeared herself for ever to the local peasantry by once dancing to them in a garden in full national costume, at a fête given by Countess Zoppola. This unrehearsed action had a charming spontaneity quite lacking in more polished programmes at the *Festspielhaus*.

I have had one real disappointment on this trip—not finding Miss Olga Lynn in Austrian national dress, with its delightful touches of green. The only feather I am likely to have in my hat was one which I bought at Lanz, in Salzburg, shaped like a huge question-mark.

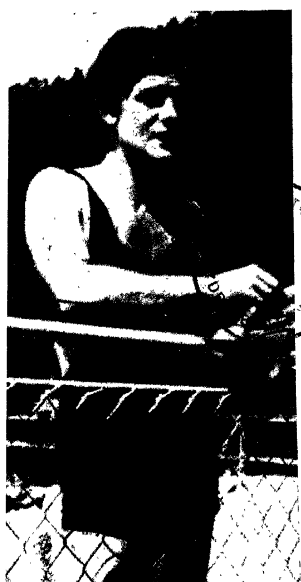
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To enjoy the real glamour of Austrian lake life you should imitate Brahms, who before writing his second symphony went to live on the banks of the lovely Wörther See in Carinthia; the charm that he felt for his rural surroundings is heard in the joyful music of this symphony. Go down to the private beach of the Golf Hotel at Dellach, and almost any time from May to the end of September you will hear equally joyful if not such classical strains.

The godfather of this hotel is an Englishman, Major A. W. Foster, who built it two years ago and ensures that it is run on lines which please. "Jimmie" Foster's



HOTEL AND GOLF CLUB, WORTHER-SEE.



PRINCE
TASSILO
FURSTENBERG.



LORD TREDEGAR IN
TYROLEAN DRESS.

SCHLOSS
WASSERLONBURG,
CARINTHIA.

GROUP, LEFT TO RIGHT --
COUNT PAUL MUNSTER,
LORD STAVORDALE,
MR. PETER THURSBY,
LADY MARY HERBERT,
COUNTESS PAUL MUNSTER,
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF KENT,
THE DUCHESS OF WESTMINSTER.



shooting-parties at Apley, in South Shropshire, are repeated in Carinthia each summer, dividing the guests between his own Karinder *Hütte* and the hotel. You might as well take a list of names waiting at the first tee during Buck's Club's Golf Handicap at Le Touquet—Milbankes, Stavordales, Michael Hornbys, "Chips" Channons, Peter Thursbys, Mr. Seymour Berry, Mr. Esmond Harmsworth, Lady Mary Herbert, Lady Bridget Parsons, Lord Dudley (with junior Wards), and the Munsters. Count Paul Munster owns the Castle of Wasser-Leonburg, about an hour's drive from Dellach. This lovely place was surely built originally to the designs of the Sugar-plum Fairy and Rumpelstilzchen, and is now let on lease to Count Hans-Clemens Sierstorpff, who spends much time big-game-hunting in East Africa. He is about plus two as a pigeon-shot, speaks perfect English, and sublet the castle to the Duke of Windsor.

They say the Carinthian chamois are stronger than the Ischl breed, due to the presence of the *Kalkstein* (the stone on which they hop about—it gives out nutritious forces). Prince Tassilo Fürstenberg and his aunt, Princess Windisch-Grätz (their family place is in the near neighbourhood), may, even still, be discussing the respective merits of their local animals. The three Windisch-Grätz boys, Hugo, Mookie and Fritz, are as good-looking a trio as I have ever seen; they are the most united family, and all assembled in London when sister Puppa (Princess Franz Weikersheim) had her baby last year. I saw them in the Apéritif Grill in phalanx formation on the night of the event.

The climate in Carinthia is about a month ahead of that of Upper Austria, so it is warm on the Wörther See in

May, when you can bathe, yacht, and play tennis under the most perfect weather conditions. The Wörther-See group does not try to steal visitors from the Mittersill, Kitzbuhel and Salzburg areas: they exchange parties, thus adding to one's stay in Austria.

IN SEARCH OF SPORT
WITH INTERLUDES

Number Four

SPAIN

S.S. "SAN TELMO," GUADALQUIVIR

February

ON THE DECK of this ship, basking in the sunshine of a Spanish noon, you might once have seen six prospectors in a land of promise for the duck shooter. Sir Randolph Baker, Mr. Herman de Zoete, Captain Eric Smith and Mr. E. T. Tatham are men of prowess with a gun. Uncle Jim (you will hear more of him later) can be classed as a grand enthusiast upon whom time is now laying her hand, while the author should figure with the "also rans."

We arrived at Seville, city of donkeys and oranges, some forty-six hours after leaving London and at once repaired to the Hôtel Alphonse XIII. I had a suspicion that some of the senior members of the party wanted to send a post card of the town home to their wives and dependants, or to drink a gin-fizz before embarking upon the boat. I personally can vouch that both of these things were done, possibly luckily so, the only letter written to date having been in the Biarritz express by Uncle Jim upon the blotting-paper of my writing-pad. He gave it up in disgust on finding out his error.

At about midday we went aboard the *San Telmo*, one of the fleet of the Islas steamship line; as we had expected a rather ordinary house-boat (Thames variety) upon which to live, our surprise was most agreeable. The ship, though in her fifty-second year, was capable of carrying six hundred passengers, and had been fitted out for ten in our case. An excellent Spanish chef was on board, and a waiter and assistant both capable of

serving in any Parisian restaurant; enquiry revealed that both had done so.

The ship, lying at anchor at the Ponte de Triana, sailed at about one o'clock, amid the cheers and plaudits of some very minor Spaniards; that same afternoon we moored off a part of the property set apart for snipe-shooting. The following morning we shot forty-two snipe: had there been any shelters behind which to hide during the driving, I feel sure we should have killed at least a hundred. Snipe were present in large numbers, and the ground covered was ideal for them.

During the afternoon we drifted down the river and up a side stream to where we proposed to moor the ship during the next four days, preparatory to the big duck shoots. On arrival at our anchorage we found the *guardas* (keepers) assembled, with assistants and horses. The chief *guarda*, Manuel, was a fine Spaniard of the country type, one of a family of nineteen; five of these are *guardas*, and their father is spoken of as the head one of this property in Abel Chapman's book upon Spanish wild-fowling.

At dinner that evening we were told that the shoot next morning was close at hand, and that we should not need to leave the ship until four-fifteen a.m. We learned that we were to ride on sure-footed Spanish ponies for at least an hour, then enter the *marismas* (marshes), in which the ponies walk as easily as on firm land, and be decanted in our butts, arriving in them just about an hour before dawn. The *marismas* are about two and a half feet deep in water, with about a foot of mud; sunk in them are concrete barrel-shaped butts, about four and a half feet in depth and three feet in breadth at the top.

You descend into your butt, wearing thigh fishing

waders, or boots of that length; you are handed down your gun (one is really enough, though some take two in case of accident), cartridge magazine, revolving stool and cartridge-holder, which, filled with about two hundred cartridges, fits on a hook in the butt and is just at the height of your hand for loading: then you are left alone to wait for the dawn, when the ducks leave the river estuary at Cadiz for the *marismas*.

The start from the ship's side that first morning was rather weird, for nobody knew where we were going; it was rather like a cavalry troop moving off for a dawn reconnaissance. And the fact of being left alone in a butt, most reminiscent of a pill-box, with a gun and a great deal of ammunition brought the happy reflection that only the duck were our adversaries.

It was a marvellous, starlit night; all that one could see was the glint of the moon and the stars on the water. At times there was a rushing whirr of wings in the dark, and often the noise of flamingos, liable to be mistaken for wild geese. As I crouched in my butt, the expectation of that dawn really thrilled me: what should I see when the sun rose?

And what is that quacking?

Duck are already on the water, and though it is still very dark I can just catch a glimpse of a few about forty yards away. Now I can hear them on the other side also, and as the half-light glimmers I pick out their forms. This looks like being a really fine shoot, with so many duck already about. I load my gun and, remembering the discourse of my fellow-guns the night before, aim well below the nearest duck. A stab of flame pierces the darkness: with satisfaction I watch the duck turn over. Not so bad, one duck for one shot—the locals say

that one duck to four cartridges is good shooting. If I can get half a dozen like this I shall have established the basis of a good morning's sport.

I fire again; another duck flutters in its death agony. I continue shooting, and miss the next half-dozen shots at them on the water; again remembering how our expert shots had argued about the great difficulty of killing duck on the water, I am in no way deterred, and merely turn my attention to the other group behind me. At the first shot one turns over (three dead before the fighting has begun). At the next the quacking of another ceases; then my next ten shots seem to have no effect except upon the water.

It is all right to climb out of my butt in my trout-fishing waders, so I gently stalk those renegade duck. It is queer that they do not get up to fly away. I suppose they are so unused to being fired at that they are paralytic with fear, and are waiting for dawn before they dare move. But on approaching them as I stagger through the mud, the horrible truth slowly and surely dawns upon me.

I have shot the decoy ducks.

Too late do those tell-tale pieces of stick, to which they are pegged by the leg, show themselves. The mallard duck and drake are dead, four wooden decoys are overturned, and the general outline of the remainder is blasted to smithereens with the number four shot. Like a whipped cur I creep back to my butt: my name henceforward will be black as the mud of the marshes of the Guadalquivir. Those few solitary quacks were the noble efforts of my poor defunct friends to assist me in my sport, and all that I have done is to consign them to the stewpot of the *guardas*. How am I to face my fellow-guns?

Those decoy ducks, probably chosen because they were the best "quackers" on the Guadalquivir, will have to be accounted for to my *guarda*, and he can speak no English, and I no Spanish. Yet I have my pocket dictionary, so I will win the day somehow.

Already dawn is breaking, and I am being punished. No other duck passed that way that day. I neither shot a duck (save my two with pegs on their legs) nor at one. Even my great sporting hero, Reginald Drake Biffin, encountered nothing so annoying in the heyday of his shooting career, when his famous right and left at a wiffle of wombats was the talk of all the clubs. Yet it was not my fault; nobody had told me about the decoys.

Meanwhile the sun had risen, and I could hear plenty of shooting from the direction of the far butts. At about eleven o'clock the *guardas* came to fetch us on our ponies, and to collect the game. My explanations as to the *pato doméstico* (from the dictionary) were received in a much tamer fashion than I had anticipated, my *guarda* merely grinning at me with a knowing look. The bag for the morning was a hundred and ten duck, which was considered disappointing; one gun had killed fifty, another twenty-two. The rest had little shooting.

That evening, after dinner, having drawn again for our places, we were told that parade the next morning was at three-thirty. Moreover, there would be three guns without butts, which would entail their being placed behind a made-up reed shelter, sitting on a revolving stool in about two and a half feet of water, and firing either from this or standing up. This contingency was not the fault of the executive, as they had built forty-two butts; half of these, owing to the varying depth of the *marismas* each year (they almost dry up in the summer),

were, this season, high and dry. This day's shoot was the best we had; three guns again had all the shooting, one counting a hundred and fifty duck to his own gun, another over ninety, while I managed to get eighty.

From the hour before dawn until two in the afternoon the duck came into their day resting-places in thousands, sometimes in clouds, more often in a steady stream of ten different kinds. At one moment there was a noise like the breaking of Atlantic rollers on the Bay of Biscay shores, and, looking towards the sound, one could see the whole horizon lift as in a long black line, and converge upon the guns. Once shot at by the leading gun, or by whoever interrupted the line of their flight, the birds lifted so as to be almost out of range of those who subsequently fired at them; however, they would go back whence they came, and in about half an hour rise up again to return.

Even in the intervals there was no lack of shooting, and I can vouch that I fired over four hundred cartridges that day; the other two guns who were getting still more shooting, cried out for more cartridges at ten o'clock; they had each started with a magazine of four hundred apiece. Came there ever a lull in the proceedings, the flamingos hastened to the rescue by giving us exhibition flights; the sight of them as they wheeled into the sky with the sun shining on them was as a shimmering cloud, sometimes white, more often with a pink sheen like the background of the *Aurora Borealis*.

Again three guns got very little shooting, yet there was no noticeable advantage from the point of fact of drawing a supposed good place, and the birds invariably altered their flight from that expected by the local experts. The weather, these two days, was perfect: chilly dawns,



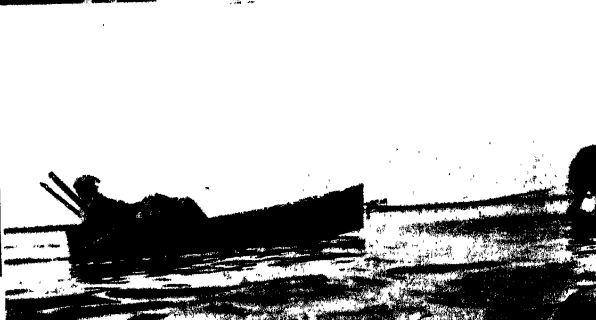
THE CHIEF GUARDA.



UNCLE JIM RETURNING FROM
THE MORNING FLIGHT



MR. HERMAN





S.S. SAN TELMO.



THE AMMUNITION
CARRIER.

coldish sunrises, and the rest of the day the sun shining with a tropical warmth, causing us to shed a great deal of clothing about eleven o'clock. If we had had bad weather like gales from the Atlantic or heavy boisterous winds and rains, we should not have killed or seen a quarter of the numbers of duck; they refuse to move in these conditions, and squat in myriads in the middle of the *marismas*.

In such perfect weather the clarity of vision was much intensified: the possibility of seeing the colouring of every duck at eighty yards' range was enough to induce the most backward among us to loose off his gun. Some abnormally long shots proved fatal to the duck—and on one occasion to a flamingo. Uncle Jim and I decided, after the first day, to abandon a private match at these birds as they were so pretty in flight, so it was not one of us.

The homeward journey on the second day was very pleasant; for at least half of it we were dragged in light punts by our horses across the *marismas*. Uncle Jim was asleep in his punt before the horses were even hitched up. Three hundred and sixty-one duck were picked up this day, including pintail, widgeon, marble-duck, teal, shoveller, and two kinds for which there are only the Spanish names, *Frisos* and *Porrones*.

The third day was an excellent one, in spite of the head *guarda's* opinion that it would be a small day and over very early. There were plenty of birds for all to shoot at, the weather was still perfect, and one hundred and eighty-nine duck were collected. Teal and marble-duck streamed over us, and mostly over Uncle Jim's butt, about which all were delighted, as he had been unlucky with his two stands on the previous days. Yet not a

sound came from his butt, and still the duck came faster and faster over him; Uncle Jim snoozed on his stool all the morning.

On the fourth day the shoot was again divided into two groups, one batch of four guns getting a hundred and ten duck between them, while the remaining two about half a mile away only managed to collect a dozen. Uncle Jim, this day, did not go to sleep, and did good execution; he left for Pau that evening to recuperate, instead of spending an Andalusian evening in Seville. And he missed something which would have stirred up his ageing bones. In one of the big dancing halls, after due introduction, we drank Manzanilla with a young gipsy dancer from the Triana quarter (where the Gitanos live). Her eyes were as green beryls, her expression like that of a playful leopard cub, and her dancing like amorous snakes.

A very difficult problem was that of picking up the duck: our figures showed seven hundred and eighty-one in the bag. Allowing for a margin of error and even of exaggeration, I am certain that one thousand duck were killed, and we know that six thousand cartridges were fired in those four days. No move is made to recover any duck until the guns themselves are retrieved from their butts; on three days this was after five hours in the butts, and on the other day after nine hours, so any duck not absolutely dead is lost. It is hopeless to attempt to use dogs, as there are some fifteen miles square of these *marismas*, and no dog can swim for ever. Again, any movement during the actual flighting of the duck would be fatal to success, such as if boats were manœuvred behind the butts while chasing wounded birds.

We saw some geese, too; three were counted dead,

but only one retrieved. It was considered rather late in the season for them, the best time being in December. The geese start to move away about the middle of January, and about the second week in February the migratory duck depart also, though a certain number remain all the year round. The influx begins in November, when they leave the Northern countries, like Poland and Russia, and from that time until the second week of February is the best shooting period.

Most of us collected an odd word or two of Spanish. Uncle Jim, before this trip, only knew "Toreador" and "Carmen," and now says "Signora" and "Caballero" with the best. And once he was heard to murmur "*gracias*," when a lively Spanish damsel tripped smartly over him (he was asleep at the time) on the way to the restaurant car in the Côte d'Argent express.

There is no kinder, better-natured soul in the world than Uncle Jim, who is a prominent and very popular figure on the Stock Exchange. In his younger days he was a fine cricketer, often in the batting order going in number ten instead of number eleven (though on such occasions he was usually a "did not bat"), while his famous bowling feat of none for a hundred and fifty-three against a strong Aldershot Command team in the early nineteen hundreds has remained until this very day a vivid memory for the fielding side.

IN SEARCH OF SPORT
WITH INTERLUDES

Number Five

POLAND

WARSAW

September

A COUNTRY to which you have never travelled seems such a long way off. Once you have bridged the intervening space, the outlandish element dies, and immediately there seems to be born a miraculous encyclopædic and geographical knowledge of which you imagine yourself the sole possessor. Even now, gently nodding with that serious mien which denotes a comprehensive store of correct information, could I be prompted sententiously to utter: "Poland? I can put you *au courant* there."

Yet the most confident person is very apt to score a solitary duck in his first innings in a new city; from this fate I was saved by the Counsellor to the Polish Foreign Office, M. Edward Kulikowski, and I only wish I could impart my impressions to you as charmingly as he instructed me.

The mental picture previously conjured up by an unvisited Poland included fur coats, wolves, a sense of romantic wildness associated with Napoleonic campaigns in the northern plains of Europe (I expect you saw the film *Marie Walewska*), and a scene of diplomatic plots and intrigues as told so skilfully by Henry Seton Merriman in *The Vultures*.

In this delightful city of Vah-sha-va (the cruelties of the language made me abandon "Polish in Five Minutes" in that amount of time) it has been as hot as London in August: no rain has fallen here for four months.

As in most Continental cities, two of the principal hotels are the Europe (built on a huge quadrangle like the George V in Paris) and the Bristol: I am ensconced in the former, which, to give it the true Polski touch, should be called the Europejski.

Having changed some English money at the rate of twenty-six zlotys (treat them as shillings) to the pound, you are then prepared to drive out in one of those clip-clopping open victorias for a short spell of sight-seeing. This will include a peep at the Vistula, which is about the same muddy colour as the Beautiful Blue Danube, a wander round the Old Square, with its painted houses untouched and unchanged for four hundred years, and a glance at the Ghetto, in which reside twenty-two per cent of the population of Warsaw.

And the Poles are a fine race, courteous, charming, great warriors and patriots, taking immense pride in building up their country under the spirit of the late Marshal Pilsudski. In the square named after him (and on it face the War Office, Foreign Office, and the Europejski), they have finished pulling down the huge Russian church which filled it, in the elimination of all Russian traces from their city.

Cæsar, for the benefit of historians and classical schoolmasters, told us that Gaul was divided into three parts: so for a hundred and fifty years was Poland, rather like a landlady who had let her lodgings rent-free to three foreign gentlemen. Germany was in Poznan, capital Posen; Austria was in Galicia, capital Lemberg (now Lwow); Russia occupied Congress Poland, capital Warsaw. Only in the last sixteen years has Poland been an independent republic, so she has not had much time to dress herself for tourists.

As in Paris (and this city is a miniature of it), so do all the inhabitants delight to sit outside the numerous cafés, the principal ones having an inside bar, restaurant, and music. And as for the Varsovian food, if I stayed here long I should have to go to the Carpathian mountain resort of Zakopane for a slimming cure, so excellent does it seem. Fukier's in the Old Square and "Under the Golden Duck," off the Square Pilsudski, make me dredge in the dictionary for worthy adjectives.

Fish especially is perfectly served, and do not worry about drinking a lot of vodka as long as you eat with it. The secret is to take plenty of oily fish in the numerous hors-d'œuvres which preface every meal. There are over two hundred sorts of vodka, varying from the one (white in colour) which we know best, made from rye, to the dark brown Slivovica, which is quite mellow and distilled from plum-stones.

It is now the holiday season, when families are all away in the mountains and the country resorts, so there is no chance of seeing any of the big balls which grace the Warsaw winter season. These begin about November, when there is also a grand opera season and an excellent ballet.

There is no Four Hundred or Florida for the Polish débutantes to attend with their escorts after a ball: the escorts go to such clubs alone, having deposited their partners safely at home, as did our grandfathers in the days of the Lotus and Gardenia in London. The local night-clubs, though they are quiet at the moment, are very bright in the winter time: Adria, Café Club, and F.F. have each a big room with a cabaret, and leading off the main room are several bar-dancing rooms, each with its separate band and dancing partners.

In one of the bars of the Adria I noticed a pretty attendant heartily chewing gum: this, I was informed, was the influence of American films upon Polish girls (lovely creatures, tall, fair hair, dark eyes), who consider it chic to imitate film stars and film habits.

However, on this visit no Byron is needed to chronicle the wanderings of a Don Juan; instead, it may require a Daudet to tell of my Tartarin bent on a sporting mission, as I am making my way towards Polesie, the land of the marshes and forests: the second movement of our *Symphonie Polonaise* can be marked "*Pastorale*."

In a sleeper marked with impossible names (I expect there was a snort when the painters of the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Company, Smethwick, England, had to paint such words as "*Sypialnych*") I journey as far as Rowno: here I shall dismount smartly, having no wish to be carried to the Soviet border fifteen miles distant, unless the republic likes to offer me an invitation to shoot its wild duck, which, I hear, the generals do quite efficiently.

(Lord and Lady Gage went there recently on a hunting expedition. Their guide was garbed in a blue suit and patent-leather shoes and escorted them by train to a wayside village where they joined an army of beaters. Not a word of the language could the Gages speak, and only the guide was their link with the other Russians. After a long trail up a rocky mountain the unfortunate guide's feet were so blistered that he had to fall out, so the party carried on quite—at least, as far as the Gages were concerned—into the blue. Finally the beaters disappeared into a wood while the hunters waited outside, not knowing what might emerge—perhaps wolves or bears, pheasants or pigeons? Armed with shot-guns they stood

at the ready, when suddenly out popped an enormous wild-boar, which charged straight at Lady Gage. Luckily she dropped it dead at a yard range—her 16-bore gun was loaded with a solid shot—while her husband and Mr. Peter Fleming, also of the party, breathed sighs of relief at the happy outcome of this Caucasian adventure.)

A mere four hours from Rowno will take me to Horyn, where I shall step out on to one of the four hundred thousand acres of land owned by Prince Charles Radziwill, a grand sporting character. Apart from being the biggest landowner in Europe, he is now (since the death of his elder brother last year) the head of Line One, Branch One, of the whole Radziwill family, to see the size of which you will have only to turn up the *Almanach de Gotha*.

It was on another of these big estates on the Polish-Russian border that a Polish military aeroplane, flying over a forest, saw about a thousand men marching in semi-circular formation. The pilot rushed back to his headquarters with the news that a Soviet force had crossed the frontier. It was only the army of beaters in a wild-boar shoot.

MANKIEWICZE, POLESIE

September

THE VARSOVIAN prelude merges with minor modulations into the main major pastoral theme: the long train journey from Warsaw across miles of flat, sandy country might have induced a mood of autumnal, minor-poet melancholy: my companions should have been the Polish poets Mickiewicz (who inspired the *ballades* of Chopin), Szymonowicz and Slowacki.

As this local talent was absent from my book-bag, thoughts wandered instead to Debussy's *Le vent dans la plaine*: towards noon they turned with material swiftness to the idea of the luncheon which I should enjoy at the hands of Prince Radziwill's Polish chef.

The Prince's house at Mankiewiczze has none of the barrack-like proportions so incompatible with modern ideas, nor is the establishment conducted on lines of pompous luxury: rather is there the atmosphere of Edwardian calm and comfort, recalling boyhood impressions of English country houses about 1905, with large coach-houses and forty horses in the stables.

To the Princess is due the credit for the organisation of a household which runs as smoothly in these distant Slavonic regions as if it was situated in Northamptonshire. And when you enter the house, instead of seeing the usual trophies of the chase, you will find the hall full of elk-heads and wild-boar tusks; in the passages you look up at rows of masks, under which you may read, not "Welton, 1932," but "Dawigroder, 1931"—and the heads are of wolves, not foxes.

In the bedrooms you will see large tawny rugs, also wolves; the general impression is that wolves are grey, miserable-looking specimens, though very fierce. Really they are rather shy, and rarely attack human beings; the idea that you bait for them with a squalling baby left alone in a snow-bound cottage in the forest is also mythical, as are those post-cards denoting sleighs at full gallop pursued by hordes of wolves. Yet they have their wolfish moments: only last winter wolves devoured eight children, the first recorded human food in this area for hundreds of years. It is believed that one wolf, having tasted blood, was responsible for at least six of the other victims.

They shoot wolves in the winter, the keepers and peasants first marking them down into a patch of forest, then ringing that area with a cable-drum and about three miles of cord decorated with red and white tapes. The wolves will never break through this cordon, and the next day the beaters drive them out to the guns. The Poles shoot them running (and wild boar, too) with a .22 rifle; they are fine shots and rarely miss.

Prince Radziwill himself is an expert at driven boar and wolves, and will not bother to shoot small game with a shot-gun, only caring about big game. He is a man of fifty, in face rather like Lord Rosebery, heavily built and not very tall; in the forest he moves as lightly as an Indian, and is as good a hunter as any of his keepers. He is justly proud of the elk on his estate; there are over five hundred now, whereas in the year after the war the herd was down to about six. The Government allows him to kill about fourteen elk a year, the season lasting for about a month only, around September, when you "call" the bull elk in the mating time.

The Prince is a very skilful "caller," and got one up to within ten yards of Sir Percy Loraine's rifle, when it was duly killed. Our British Ambassador in Turkey was lucky to achieve this on the first morning he went out; sometimes you may try three or four days without getting a shot. And one could only admire the Prince's fortitude at facing a cigar, an egg, and a glass of vodka for his two a.m. breakfast.

He was one of the judges of elk-heads in the International Sporting Trophy Exhibition in Berlin last autumn, and, immediately after it, went back to Poland and shot the record post-war elk of Europe, as well as a record bag for wild-boar—two hundred and ten in eight days' driving.

During a dry autumn one can have good sport with the partridges, by marking them into clumps of bushes and clearing them out with spaniels and pointers. A reasonable afternoon will provide about twenty-five brace for three guns, and there is no walking. You drive between beats across the fields in a comfortable open victoria, drawn by a pair of Lippizaner greys.

In other parts of Poland they specialise in tremendous partridge days, when you start shooting at eight-thirty a.m. and finish at five-thirty p.m.: seven or eight hundred brace is considered a fair day. On Baron Kronenberg's shoot to the north-west of Warsaw you will see excellent management of the driving. The outer flanks of the beaters are mounted, and at a signal from the head keeper can cut off a breaking covey and send it over the guns: they only shoot one beat every four years, having so much land.

In the Kronenberg Palace in Warsaw they have reception-rooms large enough for entertaining two thousand

guests: by contrast there is only one bathroom in the Palace, though this is being rectified immediately. The mother of Baron Kronenberg had two very famous brothers—Jean and Edward de Reszke. From all I have read and heard, Jean must have been the greatest *Helden-Tenor* of all times.

This area of Polesie ("along the forest") seems to be one gigantic marsh interspersed with wide pine forests, just what one has visualised in a Sibelius symphony. It is a paradise for the wildfowler; in this swampy country rest tens of thousands of duck from May until November, when the frozen pools and rivers drive them south to the Guadalquivir in Spain, to Salonika and Egypt, where "the sun is warm on the palm-trees, and the crocodiles lie in the mud and look lazily round them."

On account of the drought this year the wild-duck are reported to be very scarce, and it looks like being the worst season for many years. However, I shall know more when I have been up to the Pripet marshes, near where this huge river flows over the Soviet border, there to join the Dnieper, so extolled by the Russian poet Gogol.

The language of Polish-Russian (for this area was formerly White Russia) as spoken around here is to be found in no text-book: you need to be indigenous to these parts to speak it. The English butler James, however, has mastered it perfectly, so has the stud-groom Matthews, who has charge of the riding-horses in the stables. There are, too, fourteen Lippizaner greys, similar to those which are seen in Bertram Mills's Circus at Olympia each year; their trainer comes from Warsaw.

Poland is a country whose charms are not obvious on the surface: you have to scratch down a bit to find them, and then they hold you pretty firmly. James and Matthews

came out here as batmen to General Carton de Wiart with his military mission after the war, and have remained with the Radziwill family ever since. The Prince, having previously fought in the Russian army, was the General's A.D.C. in Warsaw.

The name of General Adrian Carton de Wiart, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., took its place in the annals of heroes some twenty years ago. In the Boer War, as a young man of twenty, he was wounded twice; at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 he was in Somaliland, and lost an eye and gained a D.S.O. He went out to France at the beginning of 1915 and lost his left hand immediately, and went back to the line again at the end of the year.

He was wounded seven times more before the end of the war: on one occasion I saw him standing by the side of the road at Fampoux, by Arras, in 1917 with his head bound up, still in command of his infantry brigade. I was in the next room to him in Sir Douglas Shields' hospital in 17, Park Lane, in 1918, when he would limp in each day to give one encouragement, which meant much in those days from such a great soldier.

His V.C. was gained on the Somme in 1916, when, with a faltering line in a hurricane German counter-attack, he strolled calmly towards the enemy trenches like a solitary Pied Piper of Hamelin: such an example at once destroyed any idea of "ratting."

He came out to Poland with the British military mission in 1918, and has remained in the country more or less ever since, having a house on the Radziwill estate. From here it takes only two hours to reach it by water: it is an eight-hour journey in a rickety peasant cart if you go by land.

The General, whom I bracket with Jim Vincent, of Norfolk, in his knowledge of duck-flighting, is a first-class shot in spite of his handicap: when you consider that he has to rest the barrel of the gun on the stump of his arm, and then move it so as to "lead" his bird, and that he has often killed over 200 duck in a morning's flight, it is a remarkable achievement. And in the last thirteen years he has picked up 16,000 wild-duck and 5,000 snipe to his own gun.

He shoots with a pair of long-chambered Purdeys specially built for wild-fowl and for No. 4 shot: they certainly kill a bird 15 yards farther than the ordinary gun. His cartridges are copied from Charles Hellis's pattern by a Warsaw gunmaker, and produce very good results. Cartridges are not easy to import from England (air liners are forbidden to carry them), and other Continental makes have proved both hurtful and slow to English visitors.

PRIPET MARSHES, POLESIE

September

LOOK AT THE MAP of Poland on the eastern boundary, and see where the Horyn River joins the Pripet. Between this point and the frontier the Pripet fleet of gunboats patrols, fully prepared to prevent the Soviet indulging in undue aquatic movements in Polish waters. One could see the searchlights from the ships in the distance as our patrol (one alert General, one sleepy A.D.C., several other ranks) moved out of billets at 2.30 a.m., to make good the marshland before the arrival of the dawn—and the ducks, our adversaries, reported so weak in numbers.

The previous evening we had watched the flight to their night feeding grounds and been well disappointed: our intelligence system, in the form of a bearded ancient of days who watches this lonely marsh pool for ever, mumbled a story of several hundred ducks using this place as their day resting-ground, but the General still shook a pessimistic head.

It was an eerie feeling jolting in a peasant cart in the darkness over the rough marshland to our hides of reeds, jutting out like huge moor-hens' nests into the middle of the pool. To reach them the boats, steered by poles, moved silently over the dead water, brushing up against the reeds and occasionally disturbing wild-fowl, which hustled flapping away in the strange will-o'-the-wisp light. Then the wait for the first incoming whirr of wings, while heavy splashes among the lilies remind



MANKIEWICZE,
HORYN.



PRINCE RADZIWIŁŁ
PRACTISING ELK CALLS.



A PAIR OF PRINCESS RADZIWIŁŁ'S
LIPPIZANER GREYS.



PRINCE CHARLES
RADZIWILL.



PRINCESS RADZIWI
GENERAL ADRIAN
CARTON DE WIAR



SIR PERCY LORRAINE.



one of the huge pike and carp which live in these pools.

After the first hour (the General opened fire at 3.45 a.m.) there was no thought of disappointment, and no time to eat any breakfast. The duck were coming in that regular stream of small bunches instead of one immense rush, and they were still continuing when we started "picking up" at 8 a.m.

Princess Radziwill works her four English springer spaniels herself; without them and her to manage them (for keepers here have no idea of dog-lore) they would lose half the bag in such country. No boat can get through the thick wooded undergrowth on the edge of this marsh, and even the spaniels are tired out: it is an ideal job for the strong, Irish water-spaniel. The General and I shared 162 duck in the pick-up, of which the majority were his and the majority of cartridges fired were mine.

The bag included mallard, shoveller, gadwall, teal, golden-eye, and pochard; they kill, too, occasional pintail, snæw, buffel-headed widgeon, and divers.

Such a shoot in a bad year was beyond all my expectations; I can now realise what it must be like when it is reported to be a good year. Almost was I inclined, like a young French attaché after one of Count Henry Potocki's biggest partridge shoots, to send the news home. In the middle of dinner he joyfully scribbled out a telegram to his family in Paris, "*Tué magnifique lièvre*," and this on a day when they had killed about a thousand partridges. But hares, herons, and blackbirds figure very highly in the estimation of our Gallic friends.

There are people who, wherever they go, attract droll adventures with little lurking picturesquenesses of incident. That of having one's hand kissed by the

keeper's wife (complete with red head-dress and gold ear-rings) on arrival at the duck-shooting lodge may lead you to over-estimate your own value: still, it has a charm of its own.

Even had she not the features of the lovelier Polish belles, she walked with a dignity, as do all those peasant girls, which could well be copied by our flat-footed, sloppy-shouldered, rose-bud beauties when they slouch into a Mayfair cocktail party.

The show country-place of Poland is that of Count Alfred Potocki (pronounced Pototski) at Landcut. When you hear somebody say they have been staying at "Wine-soot" you must appreciate that they have been to Landcut. Here are fourteen dining-rooms; the major-domo will tell you in the morning which ones will be used for the day's meals, and each guest has a personal body-servant.

To see the gardens you drive out in a carriage and pair, and the Count's own band will play during and after dinner; it will also have greeted you with your country's National Anthem on arrival at his private railway station.

The laundry these days does not have to travel as far as it did in Marie Antoinette's time. The Countess Potocki of that time used to send her weekly washing to Paris by coach, a distance of about 800 miles.

LONDON

September

RARELY DO I rest becalmed: swiftly did the wind of impulse darken the waters of the Pripet and fill my sails again, this time to blow me on aeroplane's wings through Berlin and Amsterdam to London. Nor for the moment do I dally here, because this is the week in September when annually until I succeed, die, or, worst fate of all, am unable to find the fare, do I cross to Ireland to the great lakes of Mayo and Galway in search of the giant pike. And they lurked around that Pripet river, too in the sluggish backwaters: monsters of 50 lb. are reported from nets.

The journey to Poland is very restful by ship through the Kiel Canal to the port of Gdynia, a most up-to-date harbour, or by the Nord express, though those long plains between Berlin and Warsaw are very dull.

By air I found the trip excellent, and can praise the Douglas D.C.3, as used by the K.L.M. between London and Berlin, as the best and most comfortable machine I have yet travelled in. They sail along as steadily as a rock over all the clouds at about 180 m.p.h., flying at 9,000 feet and missing the nasty squalls.

The Luft-Hansa Line from Berlin to Warsaw have fast machines, but they fly much lower, and seem to sacrifice comfort in flight for rigid adherence to the time-table. The new Lot Line from Warsaw is very efficiently organised, and they have the American Lockheed machines. American efficiency blundered for once in

crediting all air-passengers with no greater height than 5 ft. 10 in.: anybody of higher stature has some difficulty in getting into the seats, which are short and narrow.

The echoes of the *Chant polonais* are dying away: there is still one note upon which to dwell.

I think the lives of many of Mayfair's malicious gossipers would be in severe danger in Warsaw society. I should like to publish a list of those who should be seconded from London society for duty in Warsaw: one breath of scandal and you are called out for a duel. It is difficult to refuse to fight, for you would be cut stone-dead in every public place and the doors of all houses would be closed to you. Other unfortunate people concerned are the seconds, who cannot refuse to act without rendering themselves liable to a duel also.

And if your wife or sister happens to be of malicious tongue you can be challenged, too, for their faults; yet there are saving graces in this society, for no husband would dream of interrogating servants or using private detectives; he would consider it unworthy of his honour.

Duels are fought in lonely woods at dawn. I am told it is a cold, cheerless and very frightening business, usually with the old-fashioned duelling pistols, loaded with a huge round bullet which makes a nasty wound if it fails to kill you.

If you are a foreigner you are not exempt from a challenge: one man recently got up in a night-club and made some stupid, disparaging remark about the Poles, and within one minute there were thirty different visiting cards on his table, each signifying a challenge. He left Warsaw the next morning.

Should your behaviour not be adjudged correct in any of the formalities prior to the duel, you may be

considered unworthy to fight, which is possibly the best back-door method for a novice or stranger to wriggle out of the challenge. I should like to add that the views I have expressed are not based on personal experience.

Etiquette in Poland, as in many Continental countries, with regard to acquaintanceship with the opposite sex is quite defined and simple. If you see a friend talking to a woman whom you wish to know, you walk smartly up and bow, saying: "Please introduce me to this lady." The next move is also on your part and quite imperative, that of calling on her the next day; any subsequent move then comes from the opposite party.

As a musical pilgrim I should have made a sentimental journey to the Church in Warsaw where Chopin's heart lies buried. Instead my nearest approach to this genius was to hear his Seventeenth Prelude played by the hotel orchestra of the Europejski.

BALLINROBE, CO. MAYO, EIRE

September

IRISH MELODIES can now be added to the Polish theme to complete my *Wanderer Fantasia*. I wish some Schubert would set it to music: many a paltry libretto, among which were those atrocities of Baroness Wilhelmine von Chezy ("Rosamunde" and Company), in his hands has lived as a masterpiece.

Should you motor to Ireland, the simplest plan is to drive the car to the door of the Adelphi Hotel at Liverpool, hand over the car's papers to the hall porter, remove yourself quietly to the bar and the restaurant, and about 10 p.m. go quietly in a taxi to the Prince's Landing Stage. Here you will find the A.A. man, who will present you with the car's papers (the car by that time being on board), with that smart salute for which each of them is noted. You step up the gangway of the *Lady Munster*, as in my case, and wake up in North Wall, Dublin, the next morning. The British and Irish line have now two new ships of almost double the size of the old ones: at least 500 passengers cross nightly during week-ends between Liverpool and Dublin.

Long, straight roads, with all hopes of speeding dulled by hump-backed ridges every half-mile, lead to the west, through Roscommon and Claremorris (the Dijon of the West of Ireland) to Ballinrobe; one could note no shortage of red-headed girls, donkeys, or blackberries along the route; moreover, it was market-day in

Claremorris, which meant pulling up every 100 yards for drovers with their black cattle.

In Ballinrobe you draw up in majestic state in the main street in front of Valkenberg's Hotel, which has been in the family since the days of Captain Boycott. Do not be surprised if the façade is hardly conducive to inspire a Sitwell or a William Walton to a major effort. Within is an atmosphere of real Irish friendliness; Martin Walsh, the postman, has three days' leave of absence for duties on Lough Mask in a boat instead of round it on a bicycle; the weather is reported just right for the big pike to move, with howling gales one minute and warm bright sunshine the next.

But toiled we and trolled we never so wisely, no monster moved at my super-charged wagtails, and I had to be content with the stories of these angry fish and the leaps they give when hooked. It seems that everybody in Ballinrobe who has ever fished Lough Mask has killed a thirty-pounder: I can only think that it is a double-faced lake, and reserves its bad side for me.

I have planned already my week for next September: two days on Lough Carra, where lie the ashes of George Moore, who spent all his early life on the shores of the lake at Moore Hall; then two days near Ballinrobe, and afterwards a move to a corner of Connemara beyond Clonbur, whence you can see the mountains of Joyce's country. For in bygone days all the villages were full of Joys: similarly in Kilbride you will find they are nearly all Somervilles.

By Clonbur is Ashford, one of the homes of Mr. Ernest Guinness, whose brew I support twice daily during my stay. The estate, containing excellent woodcock shooting, is beautifully maintained, and the owner

insists on using all local products as far as possible in the upkeep.

Life is very restful in the Ballinrobe area: there is little noise in the early mornings, for none of the shops open until an easy ten o'clock. Other pens may glorify the beauties of Killarney: your Mayo and Galway man is quite content with his own lakes and mountains.

"The fisherman, like the landscape painter, haunts the loveliest places of the earth. Solitude, nature, and his own thoughts—he must be on the best of terms with all of these; and he who can take the largest allowance of these is likely to be the kindest and truest with his fellow-men."

And why should I dare to contradict the revered and respected author of *Tom Brown at Oxford*?

EPILOGUE

EVERY ONCE in a while, at no stated intervals, comes the desire to take a "walkabout," in the manner of the Australian aboriginal. When will be the next journey? And on what errands?

Asking myself these questions, I quietly disappear from your vision into the recesses of Hereford House, Park Street, London.

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for his strangely opposing enthusiasms. The real subjects of this book are not, in fact, the people in it but are three delightful things, food, sport and music. I am no sportsman: I know nothing about fishing, skiing or shooting, but the other two subjects I *do* know something about. Firstly food; there are descriptions, suggestions, scents and savours here that make your mouth water. With this book in your hand you could go anywhere in Europe and eat miraculous foods that without this book you never would have thought of. And then sport: in the chapter about shooting in Poland, somehow you have, in your nostrils as you read, the very flavour of that country! It is as though you had become yourself, for a brief while, a marvellous ecstatic sportsman. I must confess that that is the last thing that I myself would want to be. No, my true sympathy with the author is born of the music that beats in and out of these pages an eternal refrain. That anyone who shoots and fishes so adroitly, who knows almost as completely as M. Boulestin the delicate dishes that can enrapture, that he should also delight us magnificently in the minutiae of a Toscanini gives this book an unusual atmosphere. Lastly, it is a picture, I fancy, of a dying world. There is so much information here, there are so many details that perhaps fifty years from now will seem incredible fantasies; that is, I think, where this book is important. A picture of a world dying, with sporting gestures, to fast music.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE PERFECT TRAVELLER not only plans his journeys with care, he also adheres to those plans with decided precision.

He is adept in avoiding boredom at the hands of unwanted acquaintances or strangers, though never appearing discourteous.

He is thoroughly contented in his own company.

He orders food and drink with strict reference to the character and limits of the locality.

He is always punctual and he is never in a hurry.

Such a traveller is

WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM,

who was the first to encourage my European wanderings, and to whom this book is dedicated.

In addition I offer most grateful thanks to the *Daily Mail*, and especially to A. L. Cranfield, the editor, and to R. J. Prew, assistant editor, who both invariably showed me that supervision could be mitigated with a kindly gesture. Through the courtesy of this newspaper I have been permitted to jug the choicer morsels of my journalistic hares, which skipped with a certain amount of agility over its pages. I only hope that their new flavour will prove palatable.

To the editor of *Country Life* I am indebted for permission to reprint the short section on Spanish duck-shooting. Should you be able to obtain leave to import shot-guns to Spain, you would even now find the area of the *marismas* around Cadiz as quiet and peaceful